MYSTERY

THE ILLUSTRATED DETECTIVE MAGAZINE

DECEMBER

10¢

A NEW BOOK LENGTH NOVEL AND 22 EXCITING FEATURES

SHERLOCK HOLMES' DAUGHTER *Returns to Solve* THE CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL MURDER

NRA WE DO OUR PART

A TOWER MAGAZINE

ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE • HULBERT FOOTNER • WALTER RIPPERGER

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WITH
OVENSERVE

OVENSERVE RESISTS HEAT

Serve
WITH
OVENSERVE

FROM OVEN TO TABLE

Chill
WITH
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OVENSERVE RESISTS COLD

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PRETTY GIRL...SWELL DANCER...BUT OH! HER TEETH AND GUMS!

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If Mildred would only ask her dentist what to do about her teeth and tender gums! Soon, Mildred would find that Ipana and massage are the answer!

Soon enough Mildred would know that men respond to sparkling teeth just as surely as to dewy eyes and dancing grace! Mildred would hold her men!

Avoid "Pink Tooth Brush" with Ipana and Massage!

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The foods of today are too soft to give proper exercise to the gums. That is why Mildred's gums . . . and *yours* . . . tend to bleed. They are inactive. They need massage—with Ipana.

Start today cleaning your teeth with Ipana, and each time rub a little more Ipana right into your gums. Your teeth will brighten. Your gums will soon be firm. And you'll be attractive when you smile!

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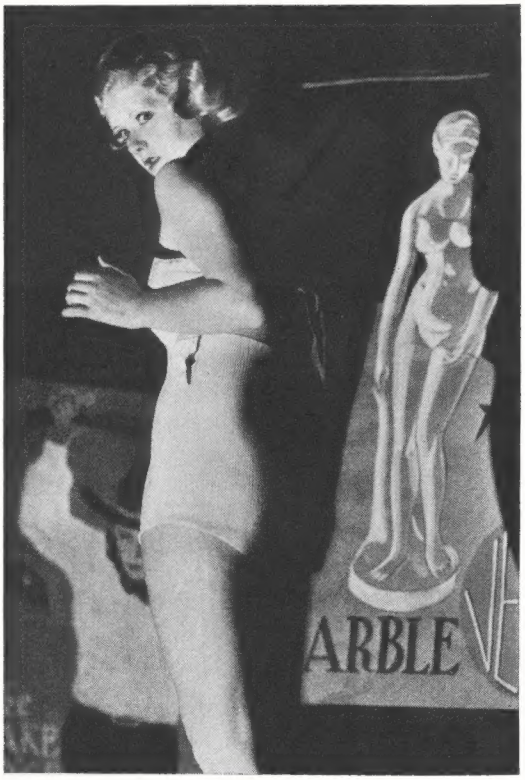
VOL. VIII, NO. 6 DECEMBER, 1933

The MYSTERY Magazine

Catherine McNelis—Publisher Hugh Weir—Editorial Director

ONE OF THE TOWER MAGAZINES ON SALE THE 1ST OF EACH MONTH

In This Number, 22 Features Plus A New Book-Length Novel



Meet Annabel Lee, the beautiful Marble Venus, in another whirlwind thriller, such as only Stuart Palmer can write—

THE RIDDLE OF THE FLEA CIRCUS

with Miss Hildegarde Withers

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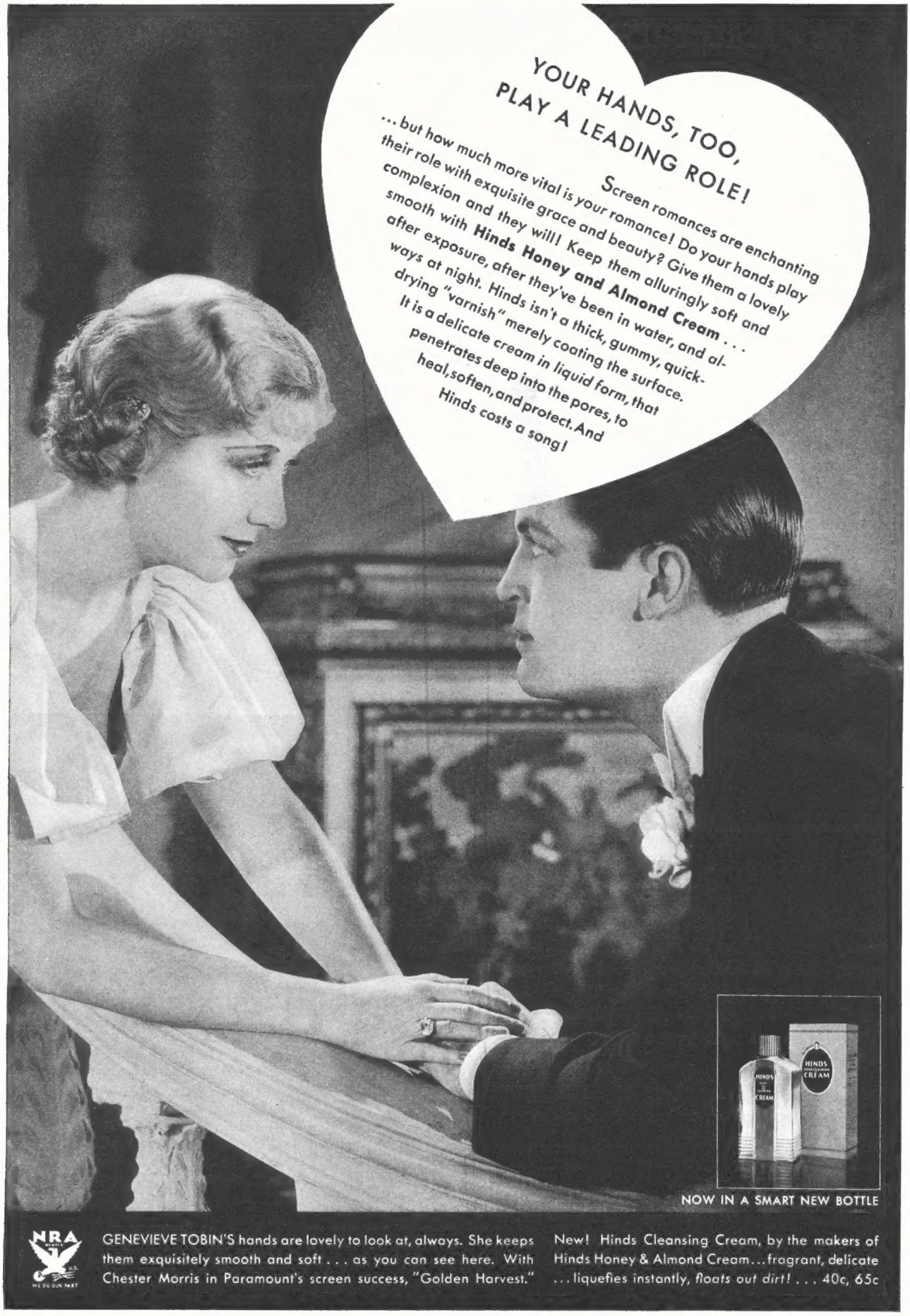
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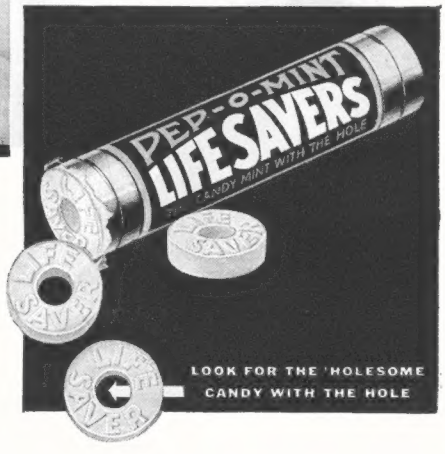
The Literary Society Nearly Exploded

. . . but it wasn't from laughter



There's no doubt about it . . . the Literary Society liked its food about as well as its Shakespeare. And after those get-together banquets, the members were more in need of a two-mile walk than a two-hour speech.

What agony could have been averted . . . what fidgeting, squirming and groaning could have been banished . . . had Life Savers been passed around after the meal!

It's really amazing how Life Savers aid digestion. Deflate that overstuffed feeling. Refuse to let your over-indulgences plague you. Snap you back to normal even after a dining marathon.

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AFTER EATING . . . **LIFE SAVERS ARE REALLY LIFE SAVERS**

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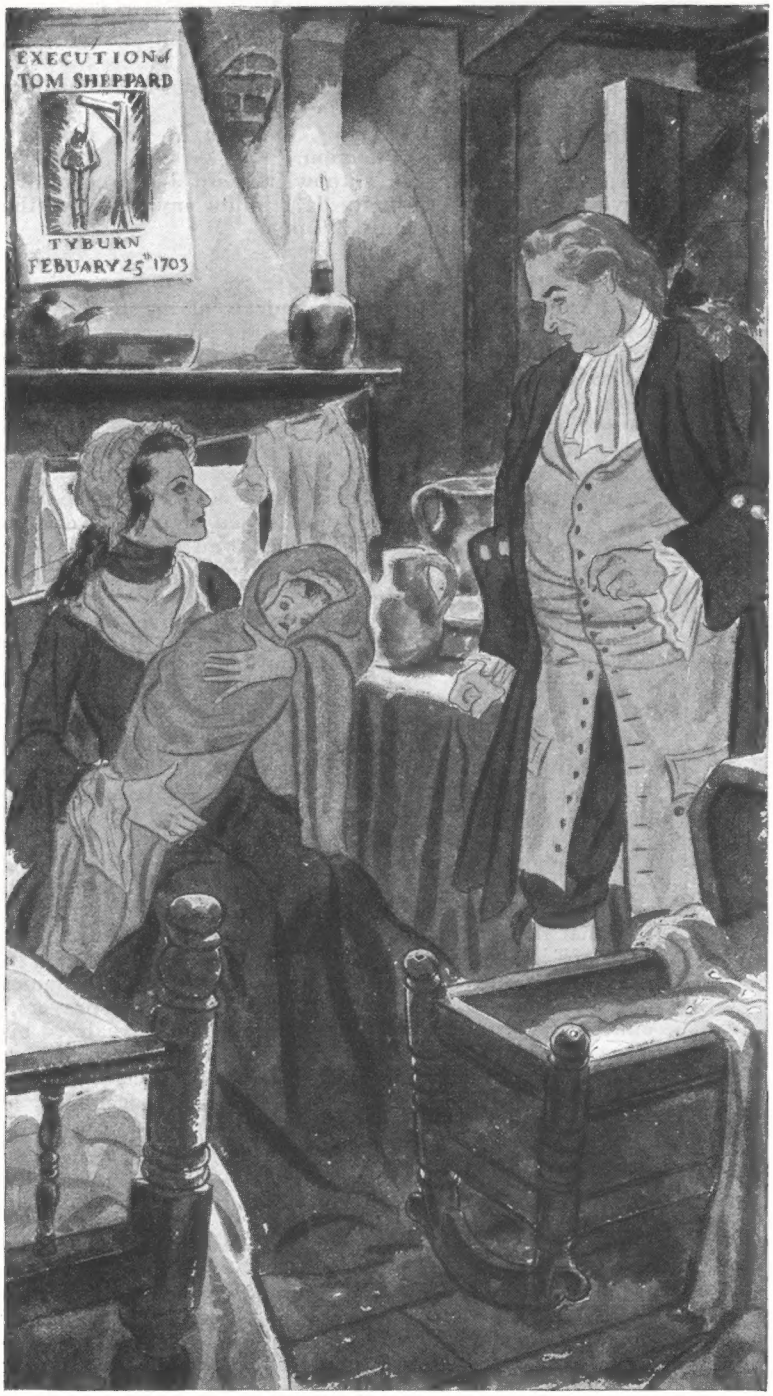
Jack Sheppard



Dramatized by

BURTON E. STEVENSON

Illustrated by

NICK RILEY

ON February 25, 1703, Tom Sheppard, a notorious thief and housebreaker, was hanged at Tyburn, and a few days later Owen Wood, a master-carpenter and man of substance, called at the widow's miserable lodging to condole with her, as she was a childhood friend. He found her with her baby in her arms.

"It's sinful to repine," he said, "while you've a child like that to comfort you. He's the very image of his father!"

"That likeness is my chief source of misery," replied the widow with a shudder. "When I think of his father's shameful end, despair overcomes me, for I fear that little Jack here will tread the same path."

"I've no son of my own," said Wood. "I'll take your boy, educate him, bring him up to my own business of a carpenter and make an honest man of him."

And so it was agreed.

(*Please turn to page* 8)

JACK SHEPPARD

(*Continued from page* 7)

Owen Wood was as good as his word, and trained little Jack Sheppard to be a carpenter, in company with another boy of the same age, whose parentage was unknown except that his father's name was Darrell, and whom Wood had rescued from the Thames, into which he had been thrown by some enemy when a baby. Wood had named the boy Thames after the river, so he was known as Thames Darrell. Mrs. Wood and their daughter Winifred, a lovely little girl of ten, completed the household. Both the boys were in love with her, and one day a crisis suddenly developed.

"Give me a smack of your sweet lips, Winny," said Jack, catching her alone.

"A smack!" she cried. "Here it is!" and she struck him in the face.

"What's this?" cried Thames, entering at this moment. Winny ran to him for protection.

"She's in love with you, I know it," said Jack scornfully. "I leave this roof this instant. If I follow my father to the gallows, it will be your fault, Winny."

One of the most notorious scoundrels of the time was a man named Jonathan Wild, a blackmailer and murderer, who posed as a thief-taker, and so managed to send his accomplices to the gallows whenever they grew rebellious. He had sent Tom Sheppard there, and had sworn that little Jack Sheppard should follow in the same path. One night he called upon Sir Richard Trenchard, a nobleman of unsavory reputation.

"You don't recollect me, I suppose," said Wild, when the two were alone, "but I happened to see you, on a certain wild November night in 1703, when you consigned your sister's son—her only heir—to the Thames."

"It is a lie!" cried Sir Rowland.

"The boy is not dead," Wild explained. "He was rescued from the river by a man named Owen Wood. I'll undertake to get rid of him for you for a thousand pounds."

Among Wild's confederates was the captain of a small Dutch fishing vessel, which regularly took the jewels, which Wild or his gang managed to steal, across to Amsterdam to be disposed of. Sir Rowland Trenchard agreed to give Wild a thousand pounds to get rid of Thames Darrell, the rightful heir to his mother's great estate, and one night Wild's gang seized him and hurried him aboard the little boat, which soon afterward dropped down the river.

Late that night, Thames was roused from his bunk.

"What is it you want?" asked Thames.

"You'll soon see!" laughed the ruffian, and catching Thames by the arm dragged him to the side. "Say your prayers," he added, "for over you go," and before Thames realized his purpose he was thrown overboard into the stormy waves.

After he fled from Owen Wood's shop, Jack Sheppard soon drifted into the society of thieves and vagabonds, to the despair of his mother, who realized only too well what was in store for him. She learned one day that he had joined the gang of Jonathan Wild, and sought him out in a low drinking den where he was carousing with two women of the street.

"Jack, my love!" she cried. "Come away with me. You'll break my heart!"

"Pooh!" returned her son. "Women don't so easily break their hearts. Do they, Bess?"

"No; not for their sons," Bess returned, with a leer.

And the unfortunate woman was hustled into the street.

(*Please turn to page* 10)

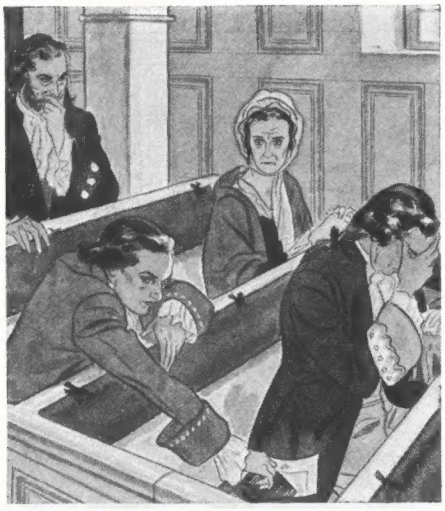
LEO: "Just a minute girls while I introduce you to the public . . . friends, meet MAY ROBSON & POLLY MORAN my new M-G-M comedy team...now girls please don't fight in a public magazine!"

MAY: "It's all right Leo, we're just rehearsing a scene from our first comedy, COMIN' ROUND THE MOUNTAIN."

POLLY: "And believe me it's a pleasure to team up with May Robson. She's a grand girl and the public knows it, too."

LEO: "See you all at the picture, folks. COMIN' ROUND THE MOUNTAIN is all fun!"

A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Screamie with May Robson, Polly Moran, Charles (Chic) Sale, Una Merkel, Russell Hardie and Jean Parker. Directed by Charles F. Riesner, from a story by Lawrence Johnson. Associate Producer, Harry Rapf.



JACK SHEPPARD

(*Continued from page* 8)

It seemed all too certain to Mrs. Sheppard that her son had started along the path which had led his father to the gallows, and where Jonathan Wild had vowed to send him; and the following Sunday she could doubt no longer. In the little village church at Willesden, near which she had a little cottage, she was kneeling in prayer for her son when someone pushed against her, and she looked up just in time to see her boy steal a fat purse from the pocket of a man in front of her, and pass it back to Jonathan Wild, who stood just behind.

With a scream of anguish, Mrs. Sheppard fell unconscious to the floor. Wild hastily made his escape, but in a moment the crowd had closed around Jack; the theft was discovered, and though the purse could not be found upon him, his behavior was so suspicious that he was dragged away to the jail at Willesden.

Jonathan Wild procured Jack's release, and bore him away to his mother's cottage.

"You have come home, Jack!" she cried. "You are going back to Mr. Wood again, aren't you?"

"No, he's not!" said Wild. "He comes with me, or goes to jail. He has robbed his master, and there is a reward out for him."

"Do not go with this man, Jack," pleaded his mother. "Better go to prison than go with Jonathan Wild. He has sworn to hang you—let him deny it if he can!"

Jack made no answer, but left the room.

"Devil!" cried his mother, her eyes blazing into Jonathan's. "How many years will you give my son?"

"*Nine!*" answered Wild sternly, and followed the boy.

Nine years passed. Owen Wood had sold his carpenter business and bought a pleasant place in the country. His daughter, Winny, had grown into a beautiful young woman, but always a little sad, for she had never forgotten Thames Darrell, who had disappeared so mysteriously one evening and of whom nothing had ever been heard. But one day her father brought a handsome young stranger into the house.

"This gentleman brings us tidings of an old friend, so he says," announced the carpenter.

"Ay, indeed! And who may that be?" inquired Mrs. Wood.

"One whom you may perhaps have forgotten," replied the stranger, and at his voice Winny started to her feet, her face pale as death.

"It is Thames!" cried Winny. "It is—it is!" and she flung her arms about his neck.

It was midnight before the household went to bed that night, for Thames had to tell the story of his adventures: how he had been rescued by a French fishing-boat and carried to Ostend, from where he made his way to Paris, and finally secured a commission in the French army. But at last the story was told, and the family retired to rest. A few hours later Thames was awakened by a scream. "Help! Murder! Thieves!"

He had a candle lighted and was at the door in an instant, sword in hand, but even as he opened it he saw a ruffian to whom Mrs. Wood was clinging pull back her head and draw his knife across her throat. Then, as he glanced down the stairs, he saw a pale face staring up at him, and recognized his old companion, Jack Sheppard.

(*Please turn to page* 12)

She signs a new code!

MIRIAM HOPKINS sets up a new code for women in her latest PARAMOUNT picture. In this new screen play her heart is large enough to give employment to two lovers instead of one . . . *The play*—NOEL COWARD'S "DESIGN FOR LIVING". Directed by ERNST LUBITSCH. *The lovers*—FREDRIC MARCH and GARY COOPER.

. . . *Vanilla!* They can't take it, but they thought Dewey did! The FOUR MARX BROTHERS as they repel a gas attack with bicarbonate of soda in the third battle of Bull Run in "DUCK SOUP", that very funny PARAMOUNT PICTURE directed by Leo McCarey . . . with girls and music.

Paramount waited 12 years for this girl!

Twelve years ago, "CRADLE SONG" was produced by Eva LeGallienne. The play was so moving and brilliant that it was at once purchased for the screen. Many great actresses were considered for the leading role but none seemed suitable until "Maedchen In Uniform" brought lovely DOROTHEA WIECK to the screen. You will know why 10 million women have raved about DOROTHEA WIECK when you see her in "CRADLE SONG", *A Paramount Picture* directed by Mitchell Leisen.

if it's a PARAMOUNT PICTURE it's the best show in town!

JACK SHEPPARD

(*Continued from page* 10)

The nine years had elapsed, and Jonathan Wild carried out his threat. The night after the tragedy at Owen Wood's house, Jack Sheppard was drinking with his two lady loves when the door of the place was thrown rudely open and Jonathan Wild entered, followed by three constables.

"There he is!" cried Wild, indicating Jack. "There is the murderer of Mrs. Wood."

"It's a lie!" said Jack. "I am not a murderer."

"You were recognized," said Wild. "Thief or murderer, you'll hang just the same."

"So the time has come, has it?" sneered Jack.

"Yes, it has come!" said Wild. "Away with him to New Prison!"

"No prison can hold me!" Jack boasted. "No prison can keep me from killing you!"

Jack Sheppard was brought to trial and sentenced to death. It was proved that he had not murdered Mrs. Wood, but death was the penalty for robbery as well as murder, and there was no escape. At last he was on the road to Tyburn.

But Jack did not despair. In spite of the fact that he was heavily manacled, fastened to the wall with a heavy chain, and surrounded by stone walls three feet thick, he was determined to escape and revenge himself upon Jonathan Wild. And escape he did, with the help of some tools slipped in to him by his sweetheart, Edgewood Bess—one of the most remarkable escapes in the history of crime—severing his manacles, breaking his chain, and digging his way through the stone wall into the chimney, and so finally to the wall of the prison, from which he let himself down into the street.

"And now for my revenge!" he muttered, and started for the house of Jonathan Wild.

Even as he did so, the alarm bell of the prison told him that his escape had been discovered.

Jack Sheppard succeeded in entering Wild's house, and concealed himself in his study, waiting for his return. Wild came in presently, bringing Sir Rowland Trenchard with him.

"I have news for you," said Wild. "You had two sisters, did you not?"

"Yes," said Trenchard gloomily. "Both are dead."

"Not so," said Wild. "One is yet living—in Bedlam—in the madhouse, where she has been driven by her son, Jack Sheppard."

"Mrs. Sheppard my sister! Impossible!"

"It is true, however," asserted Wild coldly. "She was stolen by a gypsy, you will remember. To save herself from destitution, she married Sheppard. So Jack Sheppard is also an heir to the Trenchard estate —but never fear—he will be hanged in a week. I have all the papers here in my desk, as well as those relating to Thames Darrell."

While Wild took his visitor to the door, Jack Sheppard secured the papers from the desk, and then threw himself upon his enemy as he came back into the room. But before he could kill him a force of constables burst into the room and arrested him.

(*Please turn to page* 14)

The stamp of superlative entertainment

WALLACE BEERY, GEORGE RAFT, JACKIE COOPER in "THE BOWERY"

WALTER WINCHELL'S "BROADWAY THRU A KEYHOLE"

SPENCER TRACY and JACK OAKIE in "TROUBLE SHOOTER"

GEORGE ARLISS in "HOUSE OF ROTHSCHILD"

CONSTANCE BENNETT in "MOULIN ROUGE"

GEORGE BANCROFT in "BLOOD MONEY"

LORETTA YOUNG in "BORN TO BE BAD"

LEE TRACY in "ADVICE TO THE LOVELORN"

ANN HARDING in "GALLANT LADY"

GEORGE ARLISS in "SENTENCED"

"THE GREAT BARNUM"

"I KNEW HER WHEN"

Released thru
UNITED ARTISTS

JACK SHEPPARD

(*Continued from page* 12)

Jack Sheppard was locked up in an even stronger cell, and guarded night and day, the date of execution being only a week away. One night, Thames Darrell, awakened by a rattle at his window, and looking out, saw a man in the garden below, who beckoned to him to descend.

"I have been sent here by Jack Sheppard," said the man, when Thames appeared. "Here are some papers which prove you to be the nephew of Sir Rowland Trenchard. They prove, too, that Jack is your cousin—the son of your mother's sister."

"We must save him if we can," said Thames. "He is not a murderer."

"Money can do it," said the stranger, who was no other than Blueskin. "With money we can organize a rescue while he is on his way to Tyburn. It is the only way."

Jonathan Wild determined to play for a bigger stake. With Jack Sheppard hanged, Sir Rowland Trenchard would remain, as he thought, the only heir to the great fortune, and he determined to get rid of him also, and then to force the poor demented widow of Tom Sheppard to marry him. In this way he could seize the whole estate.

So again he summoned Sir Rowland to meet him, and, on the plea of taking him to a place where they could talk securely, led him across a flimsy bridge spanning a circular building half filled with water, which led from his own house to the next.

Suddenly turning upon Sir Rowland in the middle of the bridge, he threw him over its side, and then stamped upon his hands as he tried to cling to the bridge.

"Mercy!" gasped Sir Rowland. "Mercy!"

But Wild stamped once again, and the miserable wretch fell, with a hoarse shriek, into the black water below.

Jack Sheppard's execution was set for Monday, the 16th of November, 1724, and early on the morning of that day a great body of troops was set to guard the road to Tyburn, for there had been many rumors that the condemned man was to be rescued at the last moment. And indeed a determined attempt was made, but the troops beat it back, and so Jack Sheppard came to Tyburn, where his father had been hanged a quarter of a century before.

The cart in which he rode approached the fatal tree, which the guards formed a wide circle about to keep back the frenzied mob.

"My poor mother!" Jack was heard to say. "My poor mother!"

The cap was drawn over his face, the rope adjusted, and the cart began to move.

The next instant Jack Sheppard was launched into eternity!

With the documents Jack Sheppard had sent him, Thames Darrell established his claim to the Trenchard estates.

"And now, Winny," he said, "I hope you will no longer defer my happiness."

"I release you from your promise, Thames," said Winny. "A carpenter's daughter is no fit match for a peer of England."

"Then I renounce the title," cried Thames.

So Winny relented, and they were married one bright morning in the old church at Willesden.

IT TOOK 20 YEARS TO MAKE THIS PICTURE!

By Edwin C. Hill
Famous Radio Reporter

EDWIN C. HILL

Cameramen have been photographing it ever since the year 1914. I mean the last twenty years that have shaken America industrially, socially, morally, like a rending earthquake. The World War's aftermath of despair and paralysis. Scared humanity whistling in the dark to support its courage. . . . It is well-nigh impossible to get the throbbing, tumultuous, maniacal picture in our minds unless it is visualized for us.

AND that is what the Universal people have done out in Uncle Carl Laemmle's studios in Hollywood with their colorful and thrilling "Only Yesterday"; a motion picture which is the March of the Times, accompanied by all the wild laughter and the mad cries, the jazz and the cocktails; dark followed by bursts of light, like watching the sweeping terror of a savage thunderstorm in the night. . . . It took twenty years to make that amazing, arresting and thoroughly entertaining picture of a cross-section of American life.

The all-absorbing story of a group of people who saw the Devil rise out of Hell while they played contract and drank cocktails and played at love and saw their fortunes go to ruin.

Moving and thrilling and breathlessly near to most of us, "Only Yesterday" stands out as Universal's most pretentious production since "All Quiet on the Western Front." It was built by the celebrated director, John M. Stahl, from the book by Frederick Lewis Allen, one of the best sellers of recent years.

And in the picture is an all-star cast of extraordinary proportions and class: Margaret Sullavan, a young luminary of Hollywood whose work was so pleasing to the Universal magnates

CARL LAEMMLE, JR.

CARL LAEMMLE, SR.

that they will star her next in their "Little Man, What Now?" Then, too, there are John Boles and Billie Burke and Reginald Denny and Edna May Oliver, and a featured cast of no less than ninety-three players, whose names and ability count for something out where the palm fronds rustle and the Kliegs cast their challenging glare. And back of all the stars and starlets are no less than four thousand five hundred "extras."

A multi-starred, super-spectacle Universal calls it, with some justice, one thinks, for it is certainly one of the most effective picture dramas that has reached the screen in years, and a faithful, absorbing record of the last two decades that have swept over our United States like a hurricane. . . . "Only Yesterday." . . . It is America and the blinding, dizzying rush of the times that you will see when the lights go dim. A little of all of us in that surging parade of life!

A true-life mystery drama—complete on this page! The Episode of the Beautiful Barefoot Dancer!

The accompanying photograph was posed by models, portraying the characters in the story, and made in Tower Studios.

The Flea *and the* Ant

IN the gray glow of sunrise on a Wednesday morning in August, a good many years ago, a caretaker in the *Grosser Garten,* an expansive picnic grounds in Dresden, Germany found the body of a scintillating barefoot dancer named Mizah Denise. The corpse had been thrown into the edge of a little lake, and all but part of the head was submerged. The girl had been stabbed through the throat. The spot where the crime was discovered was desolate. It was difficult to ascertain how long the body had been there. A man's white cap was found nearby.

The police learned that a men's club had held an outing on the grounds the night before—Tuesday. On the previous Sunday, an athletic society had gathered there, and on the previous Saturday a male choral society had staged a picnic in the *Garten.* The police operated on the theory that the homicide had been perpetrated by a member of one of these organizations inasmuch as many of the men in question wore outing caps similar to the one found at the crime scene

The body and the cap were examined in a laboratory. One of the scientists connected with the police department soon announced to the detective division that the crime had been committed by a jeweler. Infinitesimal particles of gold and silver, trademarks of the jeweler's profession, had been found on three strands of hair in the hatband of the cap.

"You'd better question any jeweler who belongs to that athletic society that held an outing in the park Sunday night," advised the scientist.

"But what about the men who were there Saturday and Tuesday?" asked a sleuth.

The scientist was impatient. "This murder," he said with a note of finality, "was committed Sunday night. It *couldn't* have been done last night or last Saturday."

Amazingly enough, a jeweler affiliated with the athletic society—one Heinrich Poller—confessed the killing when the official steam was turned on. The motive had been unrequited love.

The explanation of how the professor knew that the murder had been committed on the Sunday seems incredible, but is a matter of cold record.

He had found a flea and an ant in the girl's clothing. Scientific experiments have proved that a flea can live in water for sixteen hours, which ruled out Tuesday night—the night before the body was found—as the time of the murder inasmuch as the flea had died from drowning by sunrise Wednesday. The ant, however, was still alive. An ant can live under water for approximately seventy-two hours, not longer. Had the murder been committed Saturday night, the ant would surely have been dead by Wednesday morning. That left Sunday night open, to the professor's way of reasoning. That his reasoning was correct, strange as it may seem to the layman, was proved by the confession of Poller, who paid with his life for his craven deed.

The Crimson Cord

A famous true-life mystery drama—complete on this page! The Episode of the Woman Who Was Too Good for Her Husband!

FOR some reason or other, the good folks of Mountainview, New Hampshire, a charming New England village on the shore of Lake Ossipee, didn't care much for crippled, middle-aged Frederick Small. For one thing, he was a man of mystery. When he wasn't out on the lake alone in his motorboat, he was puttering away at some mysterious invention in his workshop. The neighbors felt sorry for mild-mannered Mrs. Small. "She's too good for him," was the way they put it.

But the neighbors were hardly prepared for the sinister events of September 28, 1916—happenings in which Mr. Small was to play an important part.

On the fateful day in question, Small left his cottage on the desolate shore of the lake at 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon to entrain for a business trip to Boston on the 4:07 express. At the railroad station he met a man with whom he was going to Boston—Edwin Conner, an insurance salesman, and also the principal of a local school. Small was going to introduce Conner to some prospects in The Hub.

The two men arrived in Boston at eight o'clock that night and checked into Young's Hotel. Then they dropped into the Parker House, where Small sent a postal to his wife, being careful to date it September 28, 1916, 8:40 P. M.

"My dear wife and I," Small explained to Connor, "are always very exact."

The two men went to a movie, and when they returned to the hotel at midnight, Small received the shocking news that a mysterious fire that had broken out two hours previously had reduced his home to ashes, and that it was feared his wife had been consumed in the flames.

Now, Small had been in distant Boston when the fire in his home broke out. There could be no question about that. Mrs. Small had supposedly been alone in the house and, the fire having started about ten o'clock, it was but natural that she might have been asleep, and trapped when the flames had made great headway before she awakened.

Then a strange discovery was made. Mrs. Small's body was found in the cellar, where it had fallen when the floors collapsed. It was badly charred, except for part of the face and the neck. That portion of the body lay, quite singularly, in a small pool of water caused by seepage from the nearby lake.

Around Mrs. Small's neck, investigators found a piece of crimson cord, tightly knotted. *The woman had been strangled.* That piece of cord, evidence of murder, was perhaps the only thing on the premises that hadn't been touched by the flames!

Crimson cord, similar to that found around the woman's neck, was discovered in Small's motorboat. A further search of the ruins disclosed that the fire was of incendiary origin, started by means of an infernal machine, set off by an alarm clock!

Small was arrested, convicted of the murder, and sent to the chair on circumstantial evidence. His motive was to collect the twenty-thousand-dollar insurance policy that he had taken out on his wife's life shortly before he had murdered her.

He had planned his crime with satanic ingenuity. He had slain his mate before he left for Boston, set the infernal machine, and was far from the scene of the fire when it started. If the crimson cord with which Mrs. Small was strangled had not been saved from the flames by a little pool of water, Frederick Small might have been a free man today.

The accompanying photograph was posed by models, portraying the characters in the story and made in Tower Studios.

Beauty Contest!

Get a Camay Complexion and You'll be Admired Wherever You Go

"BEAUTY CONTEST?" Certainly! Every woman in the world is entered. Your beauty, your charm, your skin are judged by every man and every woman you chance to meet.

So get yourself a Camay Complexion! It will earn for you favor and praise. And then you'll thank heaven for a soap like Camay which imparts to the feminine skin a lovely peach-bloom texture.

"The Soap of Beautiful Women is an excellent name for Camay," wrote a girl from Washington, D. C. "Every girl I know who uses Camay has a lovely clear complexion."

"My skin is so much fresher since I've been using Camay," said a young New Yorker. "I admit I admire myself in the glass."

THE "GOOD TASTE TREND" IS ALL TO CAMAY

Try Camay yourself! Use it faithfully for one month! It's changing the soap habits of the nation! Every day thousands and thousands of women—forsaking all other soaps—are taking up Camay.

Perfumed as if it came from Paris—smart as the newest fashion—Camay looks and smells high-priced. Yet you'll be delighted to know that it costs but a trifle. Get a supply of Camay today!

Another Beauty Contest Won! *The unforgettable thing about this girl is her lovely Camay Complexion. It wins attentions—compliments—in her daily Beauty Contest.*

Camay is the modern beauty soap—pure creamy-white and lavish of lather. Wrapped in green and yellow, fresh in Cellophane. Use it on your face and hands, and in your bath!

Copr. 1933, Procter & Gamble Co.

CAMAY the Soap of Beautiful Women . . .

THE Riddle OF THE FLEA CIRCUS

Ajax, the Strong Man—Annabel Lee, the beautiful Marble Venus—trained fleas on a golden leash—a bizarre Times Square murder mystery—and Miss Hildegarde Withers!

FOR the tenth time that afternoon, the stocky man in the gray suit walked past the entrance of General Orloff's Original Flea Circus, a block from busy Times Square. His air of casualness did not deceive Elsie, the faded blonde at the ticket window. She eyed him suspiciously. Not for a long time had the reformers made any trouble about the scanty costumes of the girls in the Marble Venus show inside, but this might, she thought, be a self-appointed Anthony Comstock, all the same.

The stranger finally seemed to make up his mind. There was a letter box on the nearby corner, and he took from his inside pocket a long white envelope and dropped it inside with a clang. Then he came to Elsie's window, paid his dime, and passed inside. Elsie watched him go, wondering if it was her duty to tell Max Jurgen, the manager and spieler of the show, of her suspicion that this person was John Law.

He did not linger above the low canvas booth in the corridor where the Snake Prince, Texas Joe, was dozing peacefully with the nest of fat sluggish rattlesnakes. Nor did he show any interest in the penny peep-shows which lined the long walls, each labeled discouragingly "Passed by the New York Board of Censors."

The man in gray plodded on toward the large hall in the rear, whence was coming the booming voice of the spieler, now

drowned out by loud and raucous blasts of music. As he joined the nondescript crowd of tourists and idlers which faced a platform whereon two girls played accordions with more vigor than skill, the act came to a speedy close. Marie and Mary, the famous "Hartford Twins," bowed in unison at the smattering of applause, and stepped a little awkwardly down from the platform in the direction of the dressing-room door behind them.

Marie, the prettier of the two, tried to hold back as a brawny, dark-haired young giant in a leopard skin came up toward the platform, but Mary pushed forward. While the sisters had different tastes and desires, they happened by an accident of nature to share eight lower vertebrae, and Marie was dragged along willy-nilly.

The stocky stranger in gray stood a little apart from the crowd, turning his keen and calculating eyes from the Hartford Twins to the man in the leopard skin, and then toward the lanky person who was acting as master of ceremonies.

"LADIES and gentlemen," spieler Jurgen was shouting. "Introducing none other than Ajax, the Wonder Man of strength and sinew! Never before have I had the pleasure of presenting an attraction like this, the toast of the crown' heads of Europe, imported at great expense for your amusement and edification. Come up closer, and meet Ajax!"

The spieler had a broken nose and a mouth like a letter-drop. But there was no resisting his voice.

"Look at him, ladies and gentlemen!" The spieler rumpled Ajax's hair, kneaded the mighty muscles of his shoulders, prodded him in the ribs. "Six feet six of sinew and bone—especially here." He tapped the wide forehead. "He eats, he sleeps—and they call him the Wonder Man because it's a wonder that a man can live to be twenty-eight without a single thought."

The crowd guffawed. "Look at those feet," demanded the spieler, pointing to the size fourteen sandals. "Lift your foot, Ajax, and show the ladies and gentlemen that you're a man of understanding." Ajax stood still, and received a sharp kick in the shins from the spieler. Then he lifted his foot, as might a patient performing elephant, but his smile set like concrete.

"Ajax will now tie an iron horse-shoe into knots," announced the spieler. He leaped down from the platform, and lit his cigarette with a match which he scratched across a poster depicting a dignified and undressed fat lady.

Ajax had no eyes for the crowd. He tied his horse-shoe into knots, and then untied it. He borrowed a half dollar from a man in the crowd, and bent it into a cup. Finally he tossed around a pair of dumb-bells marked "Five Hundred Pounds." . . .

Ajax set the weights down with a mighty crash, and the crowd gasped. Only one member of the audience was unimpressed. "It's a trick," he announced loudly. "They do it with mirrors. For ten censh I'd lift that m'self."

NOBODY accepted his offer, and the drunk subsided, muttering. Ajax stood there, waiting for his cue. The spieler took his cigar from his mouth and shouted, "And now, ladies and gentlemen, Ajax the Wonder Man will give you a demonstration of skill and daring never before equaled on any stage."

From beneath the platform Jurgen drew a small table and a box containing a dozen or so glittering butcher knives. He arranged these beside the strong man, who immediately chose a knife and then tossed an apple into the air. His wrist barely flickered, and the apple descended in two semi-spheres, one of which Ajax immediately swallowed.

"As his assistant in this feat of daring, Herr Ajax will have that beautiful and fearless little lady, Miss Annabel Lee, whom some of you just saw as the star of our special art attraction, The Marble Venus. Come up here, Annabel. . . ."

After a long pause, there appeared in the doorway of the dressing-room a figure all in white. Annabel Lee wore only a scanty white rubber bathing suit, which matched the smooth whiteness of her well-built body. Only her lips, full curving red, bore any sign of color.

As she passed the platform where the strong man stood, he turned and stared at her. For the first time that day, Ajax looked alive. But she suffered herself to be led to a similar platform about thirty feet away, where Jurgen proceeded to fasten her waist and wrists, by means of leather straps, to a heavy wooden shield. Her piquant face turned toward Ajax provokingly, and then away. A white silk handkerchief was tied across her eyes.

The spieler came back through the crowd toward Ajax's platform, and reached for a light switch behind him. "Let her go!" he shouted—and every light in the long hall went out, with the exception of a single red bulb above Ajax's head, and a white spot above the girl who waited there, spread-eagled.

Ajax took a knife in either hand, hefted them, and blinked twice. "What you waiting for, you big palooka?" shouted the drunk, edging closer. Somebody hushed him.

Ajax took a good grip on the blades, by thumb and finger of either hand, swung them back over his shoulders, and let them go.

Two dull plunks against the shield—and a knife quivered beneath either armpit of Annabel Lee. She winced a little.

"You missed her!" said the drunk. "Gimme the knife, I'll do better. . . ."

"Quiet, please," came Jurgen's voice. There was a strained tenseness in the room, which was felt even in the far corner where the chess players—(Nothing to pay unless our experts win)—had left their interminable games. One of them rose to his feet and came softly across the hall. The boy at the soda-pop counter forgot to polish glasses with his dirty rag.

Again Ajax let the knives go—and on either side of her platinum hair, two more blades quivered near Annabel Lee. She winced again.

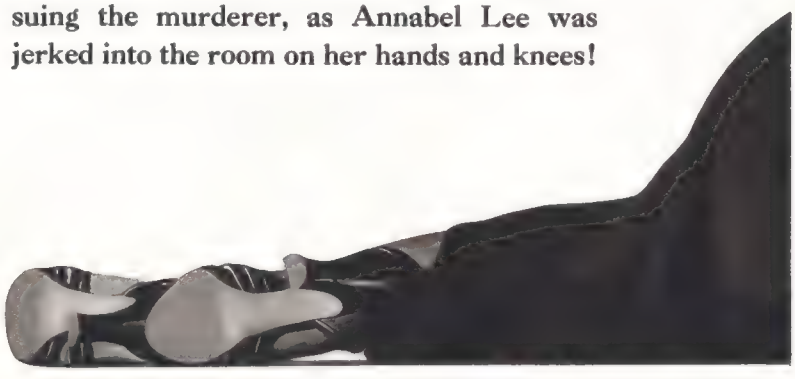
"Never touched her," complained the drunk.

Ajax seemed to have something on his mind, if that thick skull contained such an organ. He fingered the knives nervously, chose another pair, and finally brought them to his shoulders. But he did not let them go.

"Ach, Anna! Will you hold still?" he cried.

Then there came an interruption. In spite of hands that tried to hold him back, the drunk lurched up to the platform where the strong man stood. "You couldn't hit anything," he was saying hoarsely. "Get off there and let somebody elshe try." Somehow he managed to

Miss Withers kept Inspector Piper from pursuing the murderer, as Annabel Lee was jerked into the room on her hands and knees!



leap up beside Ajax. "Go on, you big fake!"

Then, to the awe and horror of the crowd, the inebriated gentleman leaned back and swung with all his force on the point of Ajax's iron jaw. The strong man blinked. . . .

"HE'LL kill the drunken fool!" screamed a woman in the audience. "Police—help, help—Police!" There was the sound of running footsteps.

"Lights!" shouted some one else. Max Jurgen fumbled for the switch, but instead of turning on the house lights, he pulled out the plug, and the room was plunged into total obscurity. A woman screamed, horribly.

Then there was pandemonium, an interminable nightmare of muffled voices, of scurrying footsteps and flying fists as men turned in the pitchy darkness to run from nothing or anything. "Ladies and gentlemen—" Jurgen attempted. But these were no longer ladies and gentlemen. They were animals, insane with panic.

Then Jurgen managed to force his way through to the lights again. "Quiet, quiet—for God's sake, quiet," he shouted. The lights snapped back. "Only a slight accident," the spieler went cheerily on. "Just a mistake. . . ."

Ajax the Wonder Man still stood, foolishly clinging to his knives. The drunk who had sought to do battle with him was fiercely shadow-boxing at the other end of the platform, daring them to come one at a time. As they watched, the mood of the crowd already swinging from panic to amusement, he lost his footing and fell headlong among them.

Then somebody noticed Annabel Lee, who hung transfixed against the shield. She had fainted. . . .

Swiftly they let her down, and she opened her eyes. "Give me a drink," she begged. They brought her water, and she pushed it away.

The show must go on, in spite of hell and high water, and this had been neither. The spieler was in full cry again before Annabel was halfway to the dressing-room. "Ladies and gentlemen, now that the disturbance is over—(the drunk had been started on his way out)—our next and final attraction will be presented in the booth across the room. There the genial General Orloff in person will present his world-famous trained fleas. See the insects with university educations as they dance the polka, play football, and race with miniature chariots! This way, ladies and gentlemen—the Flea Circus will conclude our show for this afternoon." But he was wrong. "Okay General!" (*Please turn to page* 123)

Tower Studios

JACOB GOULD SCHURMAN, JR., *associate counsel under Judge Seabury of the New York City Investigation, chief assistant counsel in the investigation of the District Attorney's office of New York, and 1933 Fusion candidate for District Attorney of New York County, gives his opinion of the third of Alan S. Hays' startling articles, "What Is Wrong With Justice?", appearing on the opposite page.*

Organized crime is today's challenge from the underworld. With the repeal of prohibition, it threatens your home and mine and legitimate business everywhere.

The District Attorney must meet this challenge. He must carry his warfare into the camp of the gangster and racketeer and into the hang-out of their political protectors. He must gather the evidence, regardless of where it leads, build up his case, indict and bring the accused to trial.

He cannot do this wearing kid gloves.

Mr. Alan S. Hays does not object to a District Attorney who hits hard. He condemns unfairness. I do not agree with his statistics on convictions; but, had I written the article, I would have scorched even more bitterly the hideous practice of suppressing evidence and framing the innocent.

Jacob Gould Schurman, Jr.

Decoration by Robert Fawcett

What chance has a defendant in criminal court! A prominent young New York lawyer writes a series of dynamic articles in which he exposes the injustices of criminal law and its administration. You may not agree with the writer—but what he says will make you think! The editors encourage MYSTERY readers to send in their candid opinions on this tremendous subject.

What is Wrong with JUSTICE?

By ALAN S. HAYS

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD: When a person has been arrested and indicted, the chances are two out of three that he will be convicted and land in jail. One reason for this is that the district attorney can, with considerable safety, use illegal practices which give him an advantage over his opponent. Certain of these we have seen in previous articles in this series. Here are some of the others which make a blot upon our criminal law.

III

I HAVE known conscientious prosecutors, but I have never known one who was impartial.

The district attorney is supposed to uphold the law—to represent the government when, and *only* when, he is satisfied the law has been violated. He, no less than a judge, is supposed to uphold justice. Yet the very nature of his position makes him unduly suspicious and distrustful. Perhaps it is too much to suppose that prosecutors might bear in mind that *every* person who is arrested is not necessarily guilty. As against his supposed spirit of fairness and equity is balanced the prosecutor's pride and personal ambition. Few men adopt the role of prosecutor as a career. Rather it is a stepping stone to higher rewards, an opportunity not only to gain experience but to show off in the limelight. A prosecutor's success is measured, not by his display of justice, but by the number of convictions he secures. District attorneys, being human, realize this and act accordingly. Therefore the prosecutor is rare who shows impartiality upon a trial. On trial he becomes the strict aggressor. He must, if humanly possible, send the defendant to jail. He must get a conviction. Otherwise his record may suffer and the public may be disappointed in him. No longer is he the public servant in search of the truth. Now he is in deed as well as in word the prosecutor, and he will attempt to provide *innuendo* for lukewarm evidence in order to get his man.

It is a rule of law that the failure of the defendant to take the stand must not (*Please turn to page* 104)

"Look, Joan!" Shirley whispered. "There! On the slab!" I peered through the stained-glass

AS Shirley Holmes and I descended the steps of the North Transept at Canterbury Cathedral she suddenly seized my arm.

"Look, Joan!" she whispered. "There! On the slab!"

I peered through the stained-glass gloom ahead of us, my heart pounding. Even though the celebrated murder of Thomas à Becket was a seven-century-old affair, the ancient stone which is popularly supposed to mark the spot where he perished still attracts many sight-seers, some of whom make a practice of prostrating themselves upon it in silent devotion. There was a figure lying on the slab now . . . the figure of a man, and but for a certain grotesqueness in his attitude I might have supposed him to be merely one of these pious pilgrims, paying his respects to the sainted bishop. But the moment my eyes fell upon his sprawling form I drew back, shuddering, striving to remain as calm as Shirley.

He was a young man, clean-shaven, with rather long, untidy hair. The soft white shirt beneath his tweed sports jacket was open at the neck; his wrinkled flannel trousers, his scuffed and dusty shoes, suggested the tourist, the hiker.

I did not, however, grasp all these details in that first terrified instant. Shirley still held my arm in her slim, strong grasp.

"Don't scream!" she commanded, her voice reassuringly cool. A moment later we were bending over the man's huddled figure.

HE lay on his breast, with his head turned to one side. His right arm was doubled under him, his left outstretched, and in his left hand he clutched a small, open notebook. I saw Shirley's fingertips rest

The Canterbury Cathedral MURDER

The daughter of Sherlock Holmes and Joan Watson, who made their debut to mystery fiction readers in "The Adventure of the Queen Bee," visit an ancient English cathedral and discover a modern crime in an old setting—the strange case of the silver pencil murder!

By

FREDERIC ARNOLD KUMMER

and BASIL MITCHELL

gloom ahead, my heart pounding.

for an instant upon that inert wrist, then she stood up, her eyes narrowing.

"Joan!" she murmured, glancing swiftly about. "You'd better fetch somebody . . . quick!"

I ran up the stone steps, my brain whirling. As the more or less modest chronicler of Shirley Holmes' adventures I had complained to her only that morning of the dullness of life since her amazing exploits in the case of the stolen Queen Bee, but I am quite sure that neither of us expected to come upon anything exciting in the course of a peaceful afternoon's visit to Canterbury Cathedral. I glanced about the dim old building, wondering to whom I had best apply for help.

Not far away I saw the verger, holding forth on the martyrdom of the unfortunate Becket to a group of visiting tourists. I went up to him, managed to attract his attention

"If you please!" I said. "I'd like to speak to you. . . ."

The verger frowned. It annoyed him to have his little lecture interrupted.

"What about, Miss?" he asked gruffly.

"There . . . there's been an accident!" I whispered. "You'd best come at once!"

STILL frowning, the verger turned the group over to one of his assistants and accompanied me back to the point where Shirley stood.

"What's the trouble here?" he grumbled.

Shirley glanced up; I thought her face, in the shadows, unusually white.

"This man has been stabbed through the heart!" she said quietly. He's dead!"

"What!" The verger's jaw sagged; in his astonishment his voice became a mere squeak. "Dead! Good

God." He ran swiftly down the short flight of steps. "How did it happen?"

"I haven't the least idea," Shirley replied calmly. "Miss Watson and I" . . . she glanced at me . . . "found him lying here a few moments ago. He hasn't been dead very long . . . the body is still warm. I advise you to send for a doctor . . . call in the police at once! And as a precaution, I think the doors of the building should be closed!"

The verger, having at last grasped the situation, acted promptly. Going to the head of the steps he signalled to one of his assistants, gave the necessary orders without alarming the group of visitors near the altar, then hurried to the main entrance.

I looked at Shirley. Did her suggestion that the doors of the building be closed mean that the man had been murdered? If so, the order, I feared, came too late. Whoever had committed the crime, if crime it was, had already been allowed ample time to escape. But Shirley did not seem disturbed; as she stood there, her figure alert and tense, her fine, aquiline features thrown into relief by her short, blond hair, I was again struck, as I had so often been in the past, by her astonishing resemblance at times like this to her celebrated father, Sherlock Holmes.

"You say the man has been stabbed?" I asked curiously.

"Yes," Shirley nodded. "With a silver pencil, of all things. If you'll bend down you can see the end of it, between the fingers of his right hand."

I did as she directed. The pencil, a heavy one, had been driven through the young man's shirt straight into his heart. Since it still plugged the wound there was almost no bleeding; the circulation had ceased with the stopping of his heart-beats. But I could not quite understand why the dead man clutched the pencil in his fingers. That suggested suicide, rather than murder.

"Do you suppose he could have done it himself?" I whispered. "Have placed the sharp point of the pencil against his breast and then deliberately fallen forward with all his weight? From the way he's holding the end of it in his fingers. . . ."

"It's possible," Shirley said, but I saw that for some reason unknown to me she did not think so.

I glanced at the notebook in the man's outstretched hand. It was clearly new and on the very first page of it two lines had been written in the form of a verse. I read them aloud.

"Oh, who could find a nobler fate
Than death where died the good and great."

"Why, Shirley!" I exclaimed. "It's a poem about himself and . . . and Thomas à Becket! A sort of farewell message, I should say!"

"Yes," Shirley agreed. "It could certainly be so interpreted. I wonder if he wrote it."

"Then you still think the man was murdered? After reading that?"

"I do. But the police won't, I imagine. Here they come now. You'd better not say anything about my opinion. Let them form their own."

I looked up. Two worried policemen were hastening down the aisle, accompanied by the verger and a small, thin man in civilian's clothes whom I took to be a doctor. A third had taken charge of the startled group of tourists.

THE doctor proceeded at once to examine the body while one of the two officers who had joined us, a beetle-browed sergeant, turned to Shirley and myself and curtly demanded our names. But the moment Shirley told him who she was, his frowns vanished, and when I remarked that I was the daughter of Dr. Watson he fairly beamed.

"Have either of you young ladies ever seen this man before?" he asked.

"No." Shirley said, shaking her head. "We haven't. Miss Watson and I arrived at the Cathedral about half-past three. The party of tourists didn't particularly attract us, so we came straight along here . . . and found the body lying on the slab. I sent Miss Watson for help, and she brought the verger. . . ."

"That's right!" the latter nodded. "My assistant at the door tells me the young fellow came in, alone, a little before three. He remembers the man particularly, on account of his long wavy hair. The party of tourists arrived about ten minutes later and I took them in charge at once."

"Bring them over here?" the sergeant questioned.

"Oh, yes. All visitors want to see the slab. . . ."

"Then some of them must have noticed the young man."

"I don't doubt they did, sir."

"Find out, Harris," the sergeant said, turning to his companion. "And get all their names and addresses."

"There's something written in here, sir," announced the policeman, indicating the dead man's note- (*Please turn to page* 114)

Shirley was tremendously excited. "Mr. Sefton didn't go out much, then?" she asked his landlady, Mrs. Chown.

A BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

There's NO KNOWING

"TELL me, Simon," Hesther asked coaxingly, "do you think I've changed much?"

"Not at all."

"Still the same wayward, irritating creature?"

"I'd rather not discuss you," Simon replied uneasily.

"Are you afraid?"

"Perhaps."

"But you still think you are well rid of me. Of course I'm older, I know, but I may be wiser."

He threw off her hand almost violently. "Don't, for God's sake!" he cried. "If I'd known what you were like I'd—I'd never have come back."

"What a charming thing to say to a woman, even if she is your wife. Really, Simon, am I so bad as that?"

"If you only knew what I thought of you!"

"Then what do you think of me?"

"Nothing, nothing."

She stared at him. "You can't mean that you've fallen in love with me?" she asked incredulously. "But of course not. You're just surprised. After ten years you expected something fat, forty and jeweled. Instead you find a comparatively well preserved creature whose slight tendency to *embonpoint* is admirably counterbalanced by her taste in clothes—a creature, in short, whom ten years of freedom from your disturbing presence has improved out of all recognition."

He was smiling again, reacting quickly to her mood. With a little bow he said, "I would rather say that ten years ago I must have been blind."

She clasped her hands delightedly. "Quite prettily put, Simon. Living with witch doctors must at least have improved your eyesight. And now that we're in the proper negotiating frame of mind I've a suggestion to make. Suppose, for Phyllis's sake, we called quits?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean as an alternative, that you should come back to us and live here."

Simon started back. "That's impossible—utterly impossible," he said violently.

When a man is missing for ten years and suddenly returns to find his wife more beautiful than ever, something is bound to happen. For this Complete Book-Length Novel of mystery, danger and romance, turn to page 59.

WHICH MAN'S

Tower Studios

SOMEHOW the man contrived to open the door of my office and to close it behind him without making a sound. I looked up from my desk and there he stood with a leering grin fixed on his hairy face. I could see at a glance that he was disguised. He didn't care if I knew it.

The whole lower part of his face was hidden under a rough grizzled beard, and he wore a matted curly wig to match it, with hair coming down low over his forehead. His skin was stained a dull reddish tint; he wore clumsy soiled clothes like a longshoreman—but his hands were smooth and manicured. He looked like some grotesque character off the stage, there in my office on Gramercy Park in the full light of day.

"Good morning, sister," he said, leering at me; showing his discolored teeth through the beard. He spoke in a hoarse throaty voice that was obviously assumed.

The suddenness of his appearance made my nerves flutter like loose strings. But I did not scream. "What do you want?" I asked in a fairly steady voice.

His ugly grin broadened. "I want to see Madame Storey, your charming boss."

"She hasn't come in yet," I said, looking at him straight.

"You lie, my dear," he said coolly. "I saw her come in quarter of an hour ago. I know that you are keeping long hours these days to catch up with your work. I know a lot about you."

I bit my lips to control their trembling. An awful fear took the heart out of me. It was his coolness. A madman you might be able to handle; this one was not mad; he was too cool. I looked longingly at the telephone which was within reach of my hand. He followed my look and said:

"Don't touch the telephone, sister. It wouldn't be healthy."

A caressing softness came into his voice that made me look at him with fresh fear. He had a smooth black automatic in his hand, fingering it lovingly. I certainly thought it was all up with me at that moment.

"Stand up!" he commanded in a harder voice. "Back to the door of Mme. Storey's room. Put your hand behind you and open the door. Back inside the room. I'll follow you."

For an instant I hung in horrible irresolution. I couldn't bear to lead an armed man to my employer. On the other hand she had to be warned somehow. And in her room she had a secret way of summoning help from the basement.

"Step lively!" he rapped out, with a significant movement of the gun.

I obeyed. What else could I do?

I COULDN'T see Mme. Storey as I backed into the adjoining room, but I knew that she was sitting writing at her big desk, her back to the windows that look out on Gramercy Park. I was tremendously bucked up when I heard her say in a voice as cool as dawn:

"Well! What's the point of this little comedy?"

"Stand aside!" the bearded man barked at me. He went on to Mme. Storey: "I know that you've got a gun in the middle drawer of your desk, Madame. If you make a move to pull out that drawer I'll shoot!"

"Wouldn't think of it!" she drawled.

He had his gun up now. His eyes turned in my direction again—blue eyes, inhuman and venomous as a snake's. "Draw up a chair alongside Mme. Storey," he commanded, "so I can cover you both."

When I got the chair I had my first look at my employer. She sat with her hands loosely clasped on the edge of the desk, her dark head slightly lowered, looking up at him with a provoking smile. You would almost have thought she was enjoying the situation. The expression of the man's fixed eyes changed slightly.

"Well!" exclaimed Madame Storey, "What's the idea of this little comedy?"

EYES

Madame Storey, beautiful, internationally famous woman detective, is warned to "keep out of things that don't concern her"—which she does by capturing the head of New York's vicious crime ring — but not without risking her life

By

HULBERT FOOTNER

"By God, you're a fine woman!" he said, as if forced to it.

"Thanks," she drawled. "Sorry I can't return the compliment."

He laughed shortly. "That's all right, Madame. Some day I'll show you my rightful face and you can judge it."

"Charmed, I'm sure," said Mme. Storey.

"Open the drawer," he commanded, "pick up your gun by the muzzle, and pass it across the desk."

With a shrug she obeyed. He dropped the gun in his pocket. "May I take a cigarette now?" she asked.

"I'll look in the box first," he growled.

There were two boxes standing on the desk. The first was an antique Oriental affair decorated with bits of mirror. This concealed a camera that Mme. Storey could operate by pressing her knee against a bulb under the desk. The other box was a large silver container for cigarettes. The man put out his hand toward the camera first, and Mme. Storey said offhand:

"Those in the other box are better."

He lifted the cover of the silver box, and satisfying himself that it contained only cigarettes, tossed one toward Mme. Storey, and taking one himself, lighted it. He kept his gun in his hand. They studied each other warily through the smoke.

"Won't you sit down?" said Mme. Storey with mocking politeness.

HE dropped into the chair that was placed for visitors. This brought him directly into focus with the camera. I saw her leg move, and I knew that she had his picture.

"What can I do for you?" she asked.

"For me, nothing!" he said, cutting the air with the side of his hand. "I came here to do you a favor."

"Nice of you! Indeed it's very nice of you."

"They say that a word to the wise is sufficient," he went on. "My word to you is, stick to your high-toned trade, see? Keep off the rough stuff."

"I don't quite get you."

"You are cooperating with the police at the present time."

"That's not my fault," said Mme. Storey. "I was appointed by the Washburn legislative committee to report on the methods of detecting crime. Patriotic duty and all that, you know."

"Sure!" he said with a hardy grin. "Good publicity for you, too. But you don't have to work yourself to death at it."

"No," said Mme. Storey.

"Yesterday there was a guy found

shot full of holes up in the Bronx, and you and Inspector Barron viewed the body together. Mitch Ahlers the guy's name is, an all-round bad guy. He'll never be missed. Just another gang killing. Keep off it, I say. Barron, he's wise. He goes through the motions, but he don't do nothing in these cases. Why should he?"

"Well, that's a matter of opinion."

"The public ain't harmed by it, are they? Us guys is engaged in a private business of our own. It's outside the law, consequently when a crook or a traitor or any kind of skunk turns up, we got to deal with him in our own way."

"That's a new point of view," said Mme. Storey half-smiling. "As I dope it out, there's a kind of combine that controls the whole business of supplying liquor to this city. This man Mitch Ahlers was outside the combine, and when he tried to get his share he was stepped on."

"Maybe so," said our visitor. "Naturally, I'm not talking."

"Are you the head of the combine?" Mme. Storey asked with mocking flattery. "That mysterious, hidden figure the police can't touch?"

He shrugged. In spite of the hair on his face one could see the look of complacency that overspread it. He was a young man. The rough clothes could not hide the fine lines of his physique. I could almost have felt sorry for him because he was trapped. Two of Mme. Storey's operatives, Crider and Stephens, were down in the basement awaiting their assignments for the day. She had only to press a button under her desk to bring them up.

"Barron told me," Mme. Storey went on, "that every head of the liquor ring had been shot down by a jealous rival as soon as he won the place. But that the organization functioned just the same without a day's interruption. Barron couldn't understand it, but it was obvious to me that these men were put forward as figureheads while the real chief remained unseen and untouched."

The man with the gun made his face like a mask, but one could see how he was swelling with gratified vanity.

"And are you really he?" Mme. Storey continued seductively. "Good heavens! Your income must surpass the dreams of avarice! I salute you as a captain of industry!"

He smiled dryly. "You've got a neat way of getting round a man," he said, "but that don't chop no wood for the stove. This morning the newspapers said that you were undertaking an investigation of the liquor ring independently of the police. That's why I'm here." His hand cut the air again. "Keep off it, see? It's no fit work for a lady like you to be mixed up in. Keep off it!"

"And if I don't?" said Mme. Storey softly.

His strange eyes flickered venomously. "I'll stop you," he said woodenly. "You're a fine woman. You put on a swell show. . . . But I'll stop you! Nobody can interfere with my business and get away with it."

There was a silence. Since he had disarmed her, the man was not so attentive to the movements of Mme. Storey's hands. One of them crept under the desk and pressed the button; a long ring followed by two short. Far away I heard the faintest whisper of the buzzer in the basement. According to the prearranged code this signal ordered the men to come upstairs but not to enter Mme. Storey's office. They were to wait outside and seize whoever came out.

"As I understood it, you are asking me to promise not to take any further steps to solve the killing of Mitch Ahlers." Mme. Storey was only talking to gain time now. "You must know that any promise given under duress"—she glanced at the gun—"is not binding."

"I don't give a damn about any promise," he said scornfully. "I'm telling you. If you go on with this case I'll know it, and I'll stop you. The whole police force of New York can't save you."

"You're a cool hand," remarked Mme. Storey with a kind of admiration—regret, too.

"The same to you," he answered promptly. "I didn't think there was a woman up to it."

"You and I ought to know each other better."

He grinned in his hardy way. "Maybe we will," he said. "When this little trouble blows over."

He got up and backed away to the door of my room. My heart was beating like a steam drill. I knew that the men must have come up by this time. I could picture them hidden behind the turn of the stairs. Our visitor would not stand a ghost of a chance even if he went out with his gun in his hand. I felt a crazy desire to warn him. There was something magnificent in his boldness.

He listened at the door, and changed his gun into his left hand. A queer grin came into his hairy face. "Will you shake hands?" he said to Mme. Storey. "Just as one good sport with another. It don't commit you to anything."

"Don't do it!" I cried, distrusting that grin.

But he had appealed to something she couldn't resist. "Certainly I will," she said rising. "Whatever he is, he's game!"

She passed around her desk with me at her heels. As she approached, the man at the door put his hand behind him and released the catch on the spring lock, thus locking the door from the other side. Mme. Storey stopped short. Measuring the distance to the open window, the man seemed to cover it without touching the ground. I have never seen any living thing move so quickly. He was out on the sill; he dropped to the areaway beneath the window while we stared at him blankly.

I screamed and threw open the door into my room. Crider and Stephens dashed in, but they were too late of course. There had been a car waiting at the curb with the engine running. The man was inside, and it was shooting down the street. I got the number of the license, but that didn't do us any good. The car was found abandoned a few blocks away.

We felt badly sold. My feeling of compassion for the man turned to gall and vinegar. Our two fellows cursed him savagely. Only Mme. Storey remained cool. As we crowded around the window she said:

"Don't put your hands on the sill. There's a perfect set of finger-prints on it that I will photograph."

Within half-an-hour or so Inspector Barron was in our office with Slosson his personal assistant, and Mme. Storey with a smile was telling him what had happened. The handsome, full-blooded Inspector was not smiling. He swelled and reddened, and drove his fist into his palm.

"By God! this is too much!" he cried. "This exceeds the limit! I'll get this fellow now if it's the last act of my life!" He leaned toward my employer and his voice actually shook with emotion. "My God, Rosika, what if he had . . . Rosika, he didn't hurt you, did he?"

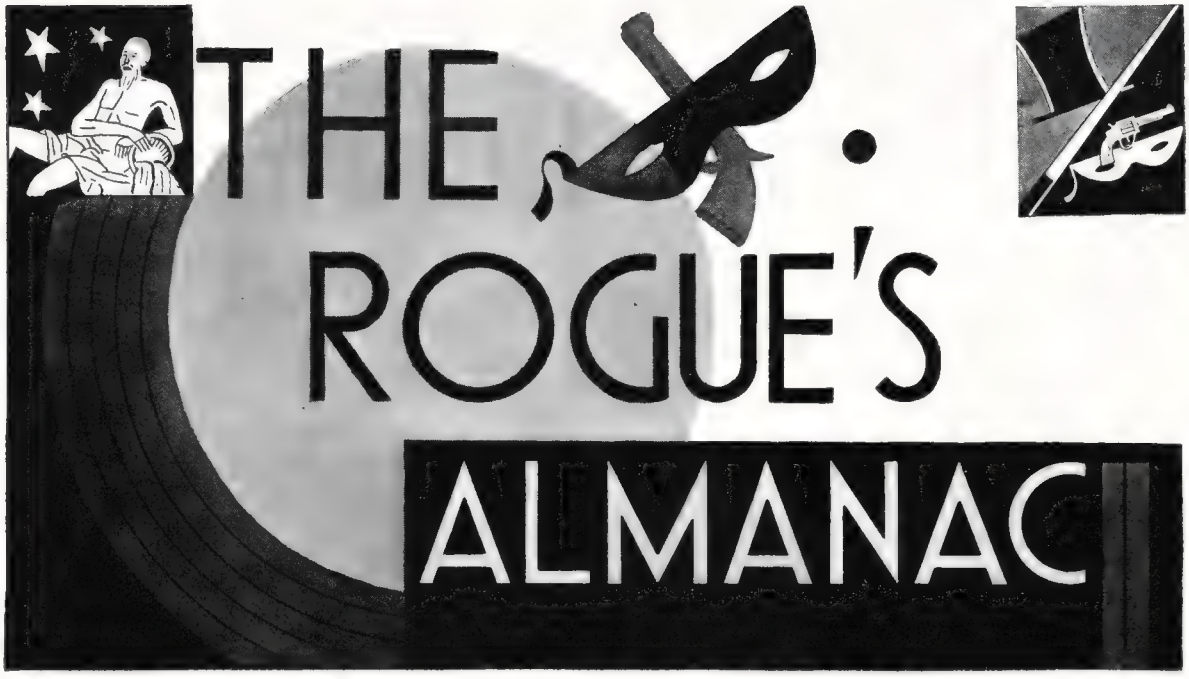
"Oh, no," she said, with a provoking smile. "I quite enjoyed it."

"Don't say that!" he protested. "It's damnable!"

At the same time Slosson, a good-looking, bespectacled young man moved close to me murmuring: "What a nasty fright you must have had, Bella. I wish to God I had been here. I wish I could save you from this sort of thing!"

"Not at all!" I lied. "I was certain all the time that he wouldn't fire his gun."

For some weeks before this the four of us had been very closely associated, and naturally we had reached a considerable degree of intimacy. Barron was hopelessly infatuated with my (*Please turn to page* 92)



Interesting facts and sayings from near and far, with the most important dates in the history of crime for December!

By DAVID FREDERICK McCORD

1. *Los Angeles.* McNamara Brothers, at trial, confess dynamite plots including blowing up of plant of Los Angeles *Times*. 1911.

2. *Toronto.* Ambrose Small, theater owner, sells property, deposits million in bank, vanishes, is never found. 1919. . . . *Rome.* Jewels stolen from St. Peter's in 1925—including the Fisherman's Ring, set with immensely valuable sapphires and diamonds—recovered by police. 1929.

3. *Somerville, N. J.* End of Hall-Mills case. Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall and her brothers, Henry and Willie Stevens, acquitted of murder (Sept. 14th, 1922) of Mrs. Eleanor Mills. Charge that they murdered Mrs. Hall's husband, the Rev. Edward Wheeler Hall, quashed. 1926 . . . *Madrid.* Joaquin Lilzo, newspaper reporter, quits job, goes to office of Premier d'Amaso Berenguer, fires shot over his head as general protest. 1930.

4. *Paris.* France refuses extradition in case of Henry M. Blackmer, oil millionaire, charged with income tax frauds by U. S. 1928. (Blackmer is still living abroad.) . . . . *Matteawan, N. Y.* William Nelson, 22, who escaped from the hospital for the criminal insane on November 19, returns with two accomplices, scales fence, imprisons guards, drives off with six more inmates. Caught with three of his companions three days later. 1930. . . . *Santa Monica, Cal.* Cornelius Van Ness Leavett, President Hoover's brother-in-law, acquitted of illegal possession of liquor, when he claims that—ignorant of the contents—he was just holding the sack containing the bottles, for a friend. 1931. . . . *New London, Conn.* Edward Duvere, "Kiss and Run" burglar, with some fifty crimes against him, ends a police chase by jumping into the Thames River and drowning. He would burglarize a house and force its mistress at the point of a gun to kiss him. 1932.

5. *Los Angeles.* Clara Phillips convicted of hammer murder of Mrs. Alberta Meadows, escapes from prison. One of two confederates is lowered to her cell window, cuts bars. Clara crawls through, is pulled to roof, flees to Honduras. 1922. . . . *Sutton Chapel, Monroe County, Tenn.* Male school teacher whips girl pupil. Her father descends on school with club. Teacher shoots and kills him. 1929. . . . *New York City.* George A. McManus acquitted—on directed verdict—of murder (Nov. 4th, 1929,) of Arnold Rothstein, 1929. . . . *Long Beach, Cal.* Captain Walter Wanderwell shot to death on his yacht, *Carma*. 1932.

6. *Brielle, N. J.* The body of James P. Granata, whose father was murdered in 1915, found pushed head downward in new grave. 1931.

7. *Mosbach, Baden, Germany.* Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, wanted in United States, for trial on draft dodging charge, wins an inning. Corliss Hooven Griffis of Hamilton, Ohio, accused of leading attempt to kidnap Bergdoll and return him to America, gets twenty-one months and is fined 2,000,000,000,000 marks —about 25 cents. 1923. . . . *Moscow.* Fifteen former executioners of Czarist regime arrested by Soviet for murder of 500 revolutionists whom they had executed. 1925. . . . *New York.* Acting on tip said to have come from papers of late Arnold Rothstein, Federal agents get $2,000,000 in dope on train for Chicago. 1928.

8. *Chicago.* Tony May, 64, millionaire newsboy, killed by bomb in package he thought contained birthday present. 1930. . . . *New York.* Part of twenty-eight policemen charged with irregularities at investigation of magistrates' courts suspended pending departmental trial. 1930.

This Way Out. Mrs. Maria Dach, a Texan sentenced to be electrocuted for the murder of Henry Stoever, her hired man, cheated the power company by starving herself to death in jail. . . . Mlle. Flore Mally, a French actress deserted by her lover, (*Please turn to page* 135)

Pajamas, Diamonds

"At ten minutes to eight I'll be at your door," said the gallant Irish Raffles to beautiful Marian Bellew; and once again Riley Dillon faced danger and death, rescued a lovely lady in distress and acquired for himself the precious gemel ring!

The icy gray eyes over the pistol brought sullen fear to Ivan's vicious features.

Tower Studios

RILEY DILLON leaned back in his chair, staring amazedly at the woman who sat at the adjoining table, eight feet away.

He was not given to staring, particularly here in the dining room of the Drake Hotel, with all Chicago's North Shore to look at. But he stared. Gone was the gaiety from his incisive features. His gray eyes, which could be cold as ice or warm as summer sun, were agleam with predatory lights. His thin nostrils quivered. And, in this moment, the woman turned her head and met his steady gaze.

She was young, lovely, poised. She had an air of distinction. The striking contrast of blue-black hair and brows with lapis blue eyes gave her whole face character. Anger rose in her eyes, a touch of color flamed in her cheeks, as she perceived the stare of this stranger.

Riley Dillon flushed. He might have done various things, but as usual he did the unexpected. Rising impulsively, he went to her table and bowed.

"I beg your pardon," he said to the hostile, challenging eyes that lifted to his own. "My rudeness was unintentional—faith, I really wasn't staring at you at all! I am Riley Dillon. I live here at the hotel, and I was rather astonished by sight of the ring on your hand. Will you accept my apology and explanation?"

She searched his face, and her anger died.

"*Qui s'excuse, s'accuse,* Mr. Dillon—who excuses himself, accuses himself!" she said, and held up her hand. "This ring? An odd piece, of no great value. I bought it in a New Orleans shop of old jewelry. Perhaps you would care to buy it?"

FROM her cool tone, Riley Dillon at first thought this an insult. Then he found her extending the ring. He accepted it rather dazedly; one look was enough. There could not be two such rings as this in all the

and Blackmail

By RODNEY BLAKE

The girl broke into a laugh. "So you really didn't know me. I am Marian Bellew."

world. But—did she know? Evidently she did not.

"If you are serious," he said gravely, "I'll pay whatever you ask for it."

"Indeed!" Just a hint of scorn, of disappointment, lay in her eyes and voice. "If you are serious, I'll set a price on it, then."

Was she merely amusing herself? Dillon could not be sure.

"Faith, it's a bargain!" and his gay, cheery laugh rang out. "And one you'll regret, when I tell you what the ring is!"

Her brows lifted. "It's a heart composed of two diamonds—old, table-cut, of little value. But it's a quaint thing. Then you accept whatever price I put upon it?"

"If within my means, yes!"

"I did not say an amount in dollars, remember."

Dillon bowed. "Madame, I am an Irishman. Money is the least of all things in this world."

"You show symptoms of intelligence." She surveyed him coldly, but few women could remain ice-clad beneath the whimsical good humor of Riley Dillon. The shadow of a smile came into her eyes. "Perhaps you know who I am?"

"Of course. The loveliest woman under this roof! That is enough."

She shrugged. "Will you sit down? We may have our coffee together."

"Thank you." Dillon drew out a chair, and his waiter transferred the coffee things to this table. He produced a cigar. At his glance of inquiry she nodded.

"So you know how to light a cigar," she said, watching him critically. Her frank eyes held a more friendly note.

"Devil and all!" exclaimed Dillon. "Who taught you about such things?"

She broke into a frank little laugh, and instantly he knew they were friends.

"My father, naturally. So you really didn't know me, then? I am Marian Bellew."

Riley Dillon sat quite motionless for nearly a minute—a difficult thing to do. He who knew all the great jewels in the world and had stolen not a few of them—he, whose nimble fingers, ready Irish wit and cheerful effrontery stopped at nothing—he, who was never at a loss for word or act, now found himself silent, abashed. Marian Bellew!

A WEEK or so ago the papers had been full of her. Supposedly the richest girl in the world, married to the most princely scoundrel in Europe. After three months of marriage she had abruptly returned to this country, presumably to seek a divorce. The stories about her, about Prince Ivan, were legion—scandalously so. No one knew the truth.

Conscious of her cool scrutiny, Dillon drew a long breath and met her eyes.

"No wonder you were angry because I stared! Well—the price?"

"That you give me your assistance for this evening."

"OH! Let me tell you what this ring is. Look!" Dillon twisted it between his fingers, then harder. It came apart, fell into two rings, each holding half of the diamond heart so cunningly and expertly made that they fit together again perfectly.

"A gemel ring, it is called; once they were used for betrothals. This one dates from the sixteenth century. It has been lost for years, but has no duplicate. Queen Elizabeth gave it to Mary, Queen of Scots, as a pledge of friendship. Later, from her prison, Mary sent it to Elizabeth, who spurned the mute plea. History, my dear, not romance! A famous old jewel. Yes, here are the ancient marks inside. Now, take it back. If I can really be of any service, if I could earn the gift—well, perhaps! But I don't sell my assistance."

RILEY DILLON

Her brows went up as she took the ring again. "How interesting!" she said coldly. The jewel made no appeal to her, evidently. "And if there were danger in helping me?"

"Your father is James Bellew, the steel king. You have money to burn. You can hire detectives, all the men you care——"

"I need honor, not men," she said quietly, "That is why I ask your help."

"I am at your service, my dear," and Dillon's warm smile flashed out. "What is it?"

She hesitated. "My father's abroad. He's furious because I left Prince Ivan, and anyway, we've never been very close since my mother died. Well—my husband and his brother Jean are here, in Chicago. They are coming to see me here at the hotel, tonight, in my suite."

She paused. Dillon's gray eyes narrowed; he tried to imagine what was coming, vainly!

"You must understand, Mr. Dillon. I am terribly afraid—of the newspapers. They do not yet know I'm here; I came with my maid only. We are going to Reno, but first I must buy clothes and things. Ivan followed me, found me. The newspapers do not care what they say about me, so that they get a story—some kind of story!"

Swift, passionate anger leaped in her eyes and was gone again. Dillon nodded.

"Ivan telephoned me, insisted on seeing me tonight," she pursued. "He and Jean. Why? Easy to guess. They would do anything to prevent a divorce, to wring more money out of me! He threatened to tell the newspapers I was here, unless I saw him. I want no more of this awful publicity! I shall see him—but I am afraid of him, of them both. If you were to be there, in the next room—if I had a witness, could prevent lies being told——"

She ended confusedly, but Dillon gave her a nod and a cheerful smile.

"Of course, my dear! With all my heart. I understand perfectly. What time does he come?"

"About eight, perhaps a little after. He is always late! They are both coming. I can send Felice away—the maid, you know. She'll be gone for the evening. If you will come——"

"At ten minutes to eight, I'll be at your door," said Riley Dillon.

AT ten minutes to eight, Riley Dillon knocked and was admitted by Marian Bellew herself, the maid having departed for the evening. The spacious corner apartment consisted of a luxurious reception room, across which Dillon was led, and two large connecting bedrooms beyond—each room, of course, having its own entry door from the corridor.

"Felice has gone to a cinema," said Marian Bellew, who was quite self-contained. "Here is my bedroom; you had better wait here. With the door ajar behind the heavy curtains, you can hear whatever is said. If—if I need you——"

"Then you may depend upon me."

"I felt that, from the first moment I saw you," and with a smiling nod, she was gone.

Left alone, Riley Dillon switched off the bedroom lights. As ever, he was immaculately garbed, straight and slim in his evening clothes. He took the pistol from his pocket, then replaced it with a shrug. What folly to have brought a pistol! Still, one never knew when——

He turned, listening. Then, swift and silent as a cat, he was at a window, slipping behind the heavy drapes. The door from the connecting bedroom, the maid's room, was opening. Two figures showed there. Then a woman's voice in French, almost inaudible.

"In here, quickly!" The maid, Felice, of course. A man was entering. "You have the pajamas, everything? Good. Tell the prince I will meet him downstairs—I'll get out of here now with my things."

Astonished, Riley Dillon realized that another man was in the room with him, moving about, apparently undressing. His amazement quickened into interest, keen curiosity.

Not five minutes later, came a brisk knock at the door of the apartment. Marian Bellew admitted her two visitors and stepped back, facing them with frank suspicion and open hostility as they bowed to her.

"Well, Ivan? So you have dared to follow me?"

Prince Ivan shrugged. He was a tall, weary-eyed man, yet his faded features held a spark of fire, the ugly signs of a bad temper and a worse life. His brother Jean was half a head shorter, and caressed a waxed mustache. Jean looked about with a bored air, and settled himself in a chair near the door, as though uninterested in what passed. In his lap he put a large book, which had been under his arm.

"You will be seated, my dear?" said Prince Ivan in fluent English. "We have certain things to discuss. I beg of you, let us be amiable, friendly, keep a clear head!"

He might be, and was, the worst kind of rascal; but after all, he was her husband. Moreover, his argument was excellent. She accepted the chair that he held for her, just in front of the curtained bedroom door. Prince Ivan drew up another to the table, but at some little distance. His brother Jean nodded slightly, toyed with the volume in his lap, and looked bored; however, his eyes were very bright and sharp.

"My dear, you wrote me that you wished a divorce," said the prince calmly.

"And I intend to get it," she replied. "I have the proofs, as you know——"

Prince Ivan waved his hand. "Oh, we may concede all that! But—if I contest it?"

"You cannot. You have nothing whatever against me; I have much against you."

Again he shrugged.

"As a gentleman, my dear Marian, I should hesitate to cause any scandal in this connection. There is the honor of my name, of my family, of my house, to be considered. You who know me so well can realize the delicacy of my——"

"Yes, Ivan, I know you," she broke in, poised, level-eyed, contemptuous. "Just what are you driving at? I suppose you want more money, to give your consent to the divorce?"

He made a gesture of deprecation.

"Not at all! I am uncertain as to what course I should pursue, Marian, in view of the information that has been given me." (*Please turn to page* 100)

I Go Sleuthing

SEVERAL years ago, there occurred near our city—a good sized town along the banks of the Ohio—one of the strangest, weirdest happenings ever recorded. For a time, it was given much publicity in the newspapers. Some people laughed, others shook their heads oddly. But when it was rumored that the young man who had gone through the ordeal, was slowly losing his mind, then the papers dropped the story. People soon forgot. Here is what happened.

Jim Engels was a young chemist; a sensitive, emotional youth, but possessed of an analytical mind. If you were to tell him there were such things as ghosts he would laugh at you. That is why the thing preyed on his mind so. When it *did* happen to him, he tried to figure it out. And not being able to do so, it haunted his every hour, like some gnawing, dreadful disease.

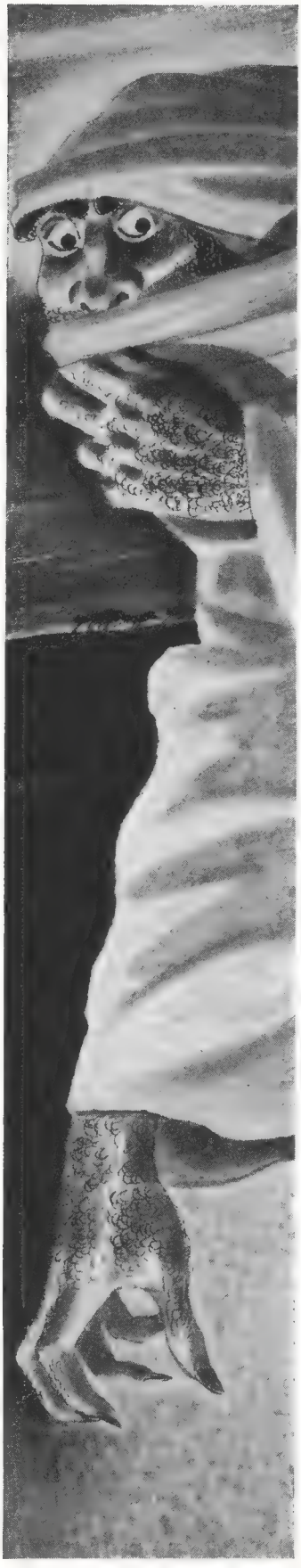
One sultry, summer night he was detained at his office. It was eleven-thirty when he finally left to drive to his home across the river in Kentucky. After crossing the suspension bridge, his route lay along a seldom used highway that followed the banks of the sluggish Ohio River. His home was in a small town a few miles down the river.

It was a dark, cloudy night. He drove slowly, for the road was narrow and full of winding curves. Suddenly, as he rounded one of these dangerous bends, he jammed on his brakes. A narrow, one-way bridge lay ahead of him. He'd almost forgotten it. A small treacherous river flowed beneath the bridge; it was the Licking River, one of the lesser streams that flowed into the nearby Ohio.

As Jim Engels' car reached the approach to the bridge, his headlights suddenly seemed to shine against a white wall. Then he realized it was fog; dense, soupy mist rising from the river below. He eased the car slowly across the narrow bridge. Suddenly, outlined in the wall of white in front of him, appeared the slim figure of a woman—a girl, dressed in a trench coat, the collar drawn high about her face. She was waving for him to stop, to give her a lift.

He had to stop, or run her down. Quickly and without a word, the girl climbed into the seat beside him. Jim waited for her to tell him where she wished to go, but the girl remained silent. Finally, with a grunt of impatience, he threw the car into gear, and started on.

The few remaining miles to the town in which he lived, were soon covered. Not once had Jim's strange passenger spoken. As they passed through the one main street of the village, the girl made a motion with her hand. She wished him to continue onward. (*Please turn to page* 121)



Write Your Own Mystery

Two MYSTERY readers contribute to the new department in MYSTERY MAGAZINE. How about you? Be your own detective! Do you know any actual events that have happened either to yourself or to your friends that you think constitute a real mystery problem? If so, try to solve it. Try your own hand as a sleuth! MYSTERY MAGAZINE will pay $100 apiece for the best true, "unwritten mystery stories" and their solutions submitted each month. On these pages is a new department for you! All manuscripts submitted should be no more than 1,000 words in length, no less than 500 words, preferably typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. Each month MYSTERY MAGAZINE will print one or more real mystery problems, told by MYSTERY readers, and their solutions. And remember—it will pay $100 for each of the best contributions published every month!

"It seems a shame to break this up, as Joe isn't going to like Center Street after this."

Murder Men

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD: Oley Dascom left a peculiar will. To his daughter, Nan, he bequeathed outright the sum of three million dollars. To Michael Burke, he willed the income from the rest of his estate, which amounted to six or seven million dollars. In the event of Burke's death, however, the six or seven millions were to be divided equally among six other men mentioned in the will—Captain Sam Tarn, Eddie and Joe Musk, Lazarus Leezy, Tony Marrioli and Yee Sin—or to those *who remained alive at the time of Burke's death!*

In our series, two of the heirs to this weird will already have met death, Lazarus Leezy and Captain Sam Tarn. Who is next?

WHEN the news reached Inspector McNeil that Captain Sam Tarn had been found murdered in the Musk brothers' room at the Sailor's Nook he, of course, wished to hasten to the scene of the crime. Much to the inspector's surprise, Simeon Graves refused to accompany him.

"It is more important that I stay here and talk things over with Mr. Burke," Mr. Graves explained. "Let me know if you discover anything special . . . anything that makes you think that Captain Tarn was not killed by Chinamen after all."

McNeil opened his mouth to speak, changed his mind, and rushed out.

"Now," said the old lawyer turning to his remaining guest, "you were telling me about the cruise of the *Northern Star* when we were interrupted; go on from where you left off."

Michael Burke was staring into space; he appeared dazed. Two days before Lazarus Leezy had been murdered and now Sam Tarn! Destiny, guided by Oley Dascom's will, was working itself out with dramatic swiftness.

"What good will it do you to know the story?" asked Burke, bluntly. "Nothing is going to prevent Yee Sin from trying to kill me after the others are dead."

"In a sense you're right," Simeon Graves agreed. "There's practically nothing we can do about it: you can't arrest a man on the suspicion that he intends to commit murder. Still. . . ."

There was a knock at the door and Martin, Mr. Graves' man, opened the door.

"There's a gentleman here to see you, Mr. Graves," announced Martin, "a Mr. Brown; he says it's very important, in regard to Mr. Dascom's will."

Simeon Graves' kindly face grew perplexed; he turned to Burke.

"Do you know a Mr. Brown?" he asked.

"No," said Michael Burke, suddenly tense and alert. He reached into his pocket and his hand closed over the butt of his revolver. Anything could happen now—

"WHAT kind of a man is it?" Burke asked Martin. "I can't exactly describe him, sir; he's quite old and large."

"Let him come in," ordered Mr. Graves.

The man who entered was well over six feet and of massive build; he was old but how old it was difficult to determine—sixty perhaps, or even seventy. His face was broad, heavily lined; his jaw protruded aggressively. There was an angry light in his eyes and his lips were set in a firm line. In his right hand he carried a heavy blackthorn stick—altogether a powerful, uncompromising figure despite his age.

"Are you Mr. Graves?" he demanded as he stepped into the light.

Before the lawyer could answer he heard what sounded like a gasp at his left where Michael Burke sat; then there was a crash! Burke had risen and in doing so had overturned the chair in which he had sat. His face was a picture of almost ludicrous astonishment.

"What did you say your name was?" he asked in a voice that was weird and hollow.

It was now Brown who appeared startled. He recoiled as though he beheld a snake. His eyes grew fiercer, his mouth twitched spasmodically.

"I said my name was Brown," he snarled in deep harsh tones, and there was a challenge in his voice as if he dared Burke to dispute it. He faced Simeon Graves. "I didn't know you had a visitor," he mumbled, "I'll have to come some other time." He started for the door.

"Just a minute!" said Mr. Graves. "My friend can wait in another room."

Brown stopped. Michael Burke hesitated, unwilling to leave them. Then he made for the door that Mr. Graves had pre-

By **WALTER F. RIPPERGER**

Tower Studios

Oley Dascom's weird will already has sent two men to death! Who is next? Is Michael Burke a hero or the craftiest villain of the lot? Simeon Graves encounters another impossible murder as he witnesses the Death of the Gold Leaf!

of Molokai

viously indicated. With his hand on the knob he paused; there was a look of deviltry in his eyes and he appeared to be laughing inwardly—then he laughed out loud, in a desperate nonplussed way.

"This get's better every day," he said, gazing straight at Brown. And Brown stared back at him malevolently but blankly as if he had no idea what Burke was talking about. "I'll be damned!" said Burke as he went through the door.

"WHAT did you wish to see me about?" inquired Mr. Graves, mildly.

"Just this . . . just this . . . keep your nose out of what doesn't concern you!"

"Are you referring to the matter of Oley Dascom's will?" asked Mr. Graves.

"I am!" snapped Mr. Brown. "I was a friend of Oley's and he had a purpose in writing that will."

For an instant Mr. Brown's eyes gleamed unnaturally bright.

"Yes . . . he had a purpose," Mr. Graves agreed, heavily, "a purpose which seems on the way to being achieved. Dear me," he mused, "neither his enemies nor his friends seem to want me to have anything to do with this will. First, there is Yee Sin . . . and now you. It's very trying."

Mr. Brown advanced a step. He raised his cane and shook it threateningly.

"You'll find it more trying," he snarled, "if you don't keep out of it!"

For a moment the atmosphere seemed like a storm—dry and sultry.

Simeon Graves eyed him steadily.

"How did you know that I was interested in this case?" he asked, curiously.

"Never mind how—it's my business to find out what happens to the blasted dogs that Oley Dascom remembered in his will. He remembered them . . . because he couldn't *forget* them!" Brown's voice rang with implacable hatred.

Mr. Graves sighed.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but I must continue with my investigation. I can't stand idly by while people murder each other. They're a pretty bad lot, I'll admit, and I don't care what happens to most of them, but . . ."

The other interrupted with a snort. "Who are you to decide who should die and who shouldn't? Let me tell you that if you knew them as . . . as Oley Dascom knew them, you'd change your mind! For the last time, now, are you going to keep out of this?"

Simeon Graves shook his head.

For a moment Brown looked baffled, then his attitude became terrifying. He sucked in his breath, his face grew red, the veins in his forehead stood out like ropes while his whole body shook with fury.

"You meddlesome old fool!" he bellowed, "interfering with what doesn't concern you. Well, I gave you your chance . . ."

Mr. Graves started to rise but the man pushed him back into his seat. He raised his heavy walking-stick.

Undecided which way to dodge, Simeon Graves tried to make up his mind whether to take the blow on his head or submit to at least a broken collar

bone when he heard the voice of Michael Burke.

"Lay off! Lay off!" the ship broker called sharply from the doorway. The revolver in his hand pointed straight at Mr. Brown.

MR. GRAVES wondered if the man in the excess of his passion would strike him despite Burke's warning. But after a few seconds, to his relief, he saw Brown lower his arm, saw him turn toward Burke and stare at him as if he were weighing his chances of overcoming the ship broker despite the revolver.

Burke seemed aware of what was going on in Brown's mind. He laughed.

"I wouldn't advise you to try it, Mr. *Brown!*"

He placed a curious emphasis on the name Brown, and somehow Mr. Graves got the impression that this emphasis had more effect on Brown than Burke's revolver. For a minute he seemed almost cowed, but it lasted for only an instant, then he was once more as formidable as ever.

"Maybe the next time we meet," he said to Burke, "I'll have a gun, too. As for you," he growled at Simeon Graves, "you mind what I said!"

Without another word he stalked out of the room, shutting the door behind him with a bang.

"Dear me," said Mr. Graves, mopping his forehead, "a very excitable gentleman. I am inclined to think it was lucky for me that you came in at the precise moment when you did."

"Lucky—hell," said Michael Burke, brazenly. "I knew when to come in. I was peeking through the keyhole. I haven't any scruples about things like that."

Simeon Graves smiled.

He felt that as soon as he heard Burke's story and found out who Brown really was—and there was no doubt in Mr. Graves' mind that Burke knew—things would begin to clear up. But his hopes faded with Michael Burke's next words.

"I've got to be going," he said, a little awkwardly. "It's getting late."

"But good heavens!" said Mr. Graves, "you're not going before you tell me what happened on the *Northern Star* . . . and who this man Brown is?"

The other grew visibly embarrassed.

"I wish you wouldn't ask me," he said, after a time.

"I've got to know," Mr. Graves persisted.

"Don't ask me—I hate to tell lies," said Michael Burke.

Simeon Graves shook his head impatiently. Things were no better than they were before, worse if anything.

"But, why? You're not afraid of Brown, are you? Surely, it can't be that . . .?"

Michael Burke laughed good-naturedly.

"No, it's not that. I'm not afraid of him. It's just that everything is different . . . now."

WHEN a man finds himself in a predicament he is apt to regard an impulse in the light of an inspiration. It was so with Tony Marrioli on the day following the murder of Captain Sam Tarn.

Tony was badly frightened. It was just beginning to dawn on him that Oley Dascom's will would in the end result in the death of all but one of the legatees, and that one, very likely, would be—Yee Sin.

So Tony had come to see Nan Dascom—the first step of his inspired plan.

With a cringing, almost timid, air, he entered the living room.

"*Scusatemi,*" he apologized to the girl in the room, "because I com' to bother you, but me—I'm in great troubl'."

Nan Dascom gazed at him with unfriendly eyes. He was one of the Murder Men of Molokai.

"I'm glad to hear it," she said, bitterly, and added with satisfaction: "The more trouble that you're in, the better I like it."

"You don't understand, Meess. Tony ees not a bad fella—not lika de others. He justa poor sailor on de sheep. When dat theeng happen, he gotta do what dey tell heem—see? De Captain, he say, 'push away de boat, Tony'—and Tony he gotta push away de boat."

"That sounds fine," said the girl scornfully. "What do you want me to do about it?"

"If you no help Tony, Tony ees one dead Italiano."

With a sense of artistry, he allowed his voice to tremble, but it brought only an unsympathetic laugh from the girl.

"If Yee Sin don't kill me, deesa Burke, he do eet!"

He noted the brief flash in the girl's eyes at the mention of Michael Burke's name.

"Deesa Burke," he went on, "ees one devil. Everytheeng ees heesa fault."

Tony Marrioli was not aware that Michael Burke had awakened any interest in the girl. He had not decided to saddle the blame on Burke for that reason. It would have served his purpose just as well if he had selected any one of the others.

"Deesa Burke ees in love weeth your mother. It makes all de troubl'. He maka de love to her. Your mother, a very fina lady. She no lika eet and tella your father. Then there ees a beeg fight . . ."

Nan Dascom felt suddenly ill. Up to this minute she had cherished a secret hope that there was some mistake about Michael Burke, that something would develop to prove that he wasn't as bad as the others.

Tony Marrioli was rambling on. She saw him as though he were far away—enveloped in mist. She scarcely took in the rest of his story. How Burke, repulsed by her mother, hit upon a plan of vengeance. How he, working on the cupidity of Yee Sin and Captain Tarn, had prevailed on them to set Oley Dascom and his little family adrift in mid ocean. Tony had wept at this—it made him so sad—but he was compelled to carry out orders. He wanted "Meesa Dascom" to realize his helplessness in the matter.

It was a familiar tale to Nan Dascom. She had heard it all often enough from her father, only that Michael Burke had been the chief conspirator was new. For some reason her father had withheld that from her. But now she understood why Oley Dascom's will was drawn so that Burke should be the last to die—that all the lust to kill of this murderous crew should be focused on him—her father had hated Burke above them all!

Michael Burke himself had lent color to the Italian's story. Hadn't he told her how lovely he always thought her mother?

From another angle it sounded plausible, too: Oley Dascom had often said to her—"Your mother was the

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most beautiful woman that ever lived. . . ." That a woman of such charm should rouse the passions of a much younger man—a man like Burke—was not strange. Nan could see it all too clearly now.

She wouldn't admit to herself that there was any basis for the utterly hopeless misery she felt inside her . . . she hated Burke! . . . had always hated him! . . . especially that time he had kissed her. . . .

Dry-eyed she gazed at Tony Marrioli.

"Why have you come to tell me this?" she asked. Her voice was shaky.

For a moment he hemmed and hawed. The real purpose of his visit was about to be disclosed. Everything depended on this. Unless he convinced her, his escape was cut off. It meant going back to fighting the Musk brothers, Michael Burke, and . . . Yee Sin. What made it particularly difficult was the look in her eyes, that hard distant look. He had no way of knowing that she wasn't thinking of him at all that she was thinking of Michael Burke and wondering why that aching feeling deep inside her refused to die down. At last he began.

He wanted her to realize that the whole thing wasn't his fault. He was just a poor Italian who didn't want any of the money that would go to him if Michael Burke died. He hadn't done anything to deserve it any more than he had to earn the enmity of Oley Dascom. All he wanted was to get away, to escape from Michael Burke, from Yee Sin, and to get back to his beloved Italy . . . to live in peace.

It was all so simple . . . except that he hadn't any money. "Mees Dascom" had plenty—she was so rich. She could arrange that for him. He didn't need much—twenty thousand . . . even fifteen would do. . . . It would mean nothing to her and besides she would get it back many, many times over. She could have his share of the money to which he would be entitled under her father's will. . . .

"I signa de paper," he finished, as if nothing could be fairer than that.

There was no change in the girl's expression, although the pain in her heart received an additional wrench. This miserable creature before her seemed to take Michael Burke's death for assured. But that was what she wanted! she told herself the next instant. She wanted Burke to die . . . now more than ever. She loathed, she hated and despised him!

She owed Marrioli something too. He had opened her eyes to what Michael Burke's true character really was. Yes, she owed him something. . . .

Nan Dascom heard the doorbell ring. She heard Nina's feet pattering down the hall, but she paid no attention. It didn't matter who it was. . . .

TONY MARRIOLI had not yet received his answer and he was just beginning to enlarge on his plea when Burke entered.

Nan's back was to the door but she turned swiftly at the sound.

"You! What are you doing here?" she blazed. All color faded from her features.

"I've come to have a little talk with you—about a man named Brown," he began jovially.

He half turned to fling his hat into a chair and caught sight of Tony Marrioli.

"Say—who let you in?" he growled. His face was like a thundercloud.

Tony Marrioli backed away but kept his eyes on Burke.

"I don't wonder you hate seeing him here," Nan burst out in quivering tones. "He's told me!"

Burke looked at her in astonishment.

"Told you what?" he asked.

"Told me everything, told me how you made love to my mother, how you quarreled with my father over her . . . you beast . . . you beast." The words came with a rush, she was almost hysterical. Tears of helpless rage welled up in her eyes.

Michael Burke whistled softly. Several times he looked from one to the other, but his gaze finally remained on the Italian.

Tony Marrioli retreated another step. Burke was coming toward him, not uttering a word, but his face a picture of such over-mastering wrath as to terrify the Italian.

"Stop! Don't come no further!" Tony Marrioli screamed.

He reached into his hip-pocket and drew a knife that gleamed wickedly.

Michael Burke paused. Then he laughed and advanced another step. The next instant a streak of blue steel whizzed past him. He ducked just in time to escape the dagger Marrioli had thrown. There was a thud behind him as it landed and stuck quivering in the panelling . . . and a cry of pain from Nan Dascom!

Michael Burke whirled and saw her sink to her knees. He started to go to her assistance, but something seemed to snap in his brain and make him forget everything but Tony Marrioli. Burke let out a roar . . . his ferocity as he gathered himself for a leap was devastating, then . . . he was on top of Tony Marrioli. His left hand seized the Italian by the lapels of his coat while his right fist crashed again and again into Marrioli's face. He lifted him up bodily and threw him to the floor . . . lifted him up again and held him in the air as if undecided what to do with him . . . then he hurled him through the open window.

Michael Burke looked once, then something snapped and he forgot everything but Tony Marrioli.

In a few strides he was beside the girl. She was lying on the floor. her eyes were shut. She had fainted. The damp red patch on the left shoulder of her dress was slowly growing larger.

With an oath Michael Burke knelt down and putting his arm around her half raised her from the floor. For seconds he looked about him helplessly. Then inserting two fingers in the neck of her gown he tore at it until he laid bare her shoulder. Anxiously he examined the wound—it wasn't serious—only a superficial flesh wound. The knife must have grazed her in its flight.

He raised her and placed her gently on the couch. He went to the door and roared to Nina to bring some water. Then he went back to Nan.

He was bending over her, his lips almost touching (*Please turn to page* 107)

The DOCTOR

THE boy is perfectly normal, you understand, normal in every respect. I've spent no end of money making sure of that. Had Carlisle look him over twice. You know Carlisle?"

"You mean Dr. Carlisle, I suppose." In spite of himself Hallowell could not keep a hint of sharpness out of his voice, and the emphasis upon the title was faintly rebuking. "*Dr.* Carlisle, the pediatrist?"

"Yes. Highest priced man in the country, they tell me; but I always believe in getting the best. Then I called Brandt. Of course you know him. He was the one who sent me to you."

"Just what did he say about the case?" Hallowell asked. He was leaning back negligently in his chair. His eyes were half closed, but he was watching the other man from under drooping lids, watching and speculating on his reason for being there. Brandt had sent him for some purpose. He would not inflict such a creature upon a colleague without cause, and yet his letter had explained nothing. That was Brandt's habit, of course, never to give a hint of his own opinion until he had heard the other man's. Probably a good idea, but a hint might have helped in this case. Especially since the fellow—What was his name. Kessler? No. (A glance at Brandt's letter)—Gessler, Jules Gessler, seemed unable to

sees A GHOST

make himself clear. Could it be that *he* was the patient, and not the child?

"Exactly what did Dr. Brandt say about the case?" Hallowell asked again, and Gessler answered:

"He didn't take it seriously at first. I think he got the idea Carlisle, *Dr.* Carlisle, had sent me to him because *I* needed care." He laughed a short, unmirthful laugh, and Hallowell started at this unconscious rendering of his own thoughts. "It was all I could do to get him out to the house. But after he'd seen the boy he came three times."

"And then?"

"Then he gave me that letter to you. Said it was more in your line than in his . . . that you might be able to help."

"I see."

HALLOWELL did not see at all; but he doubtless would, if he could once get the man to talk. Or, rather, to say something enlightening when he did talk, for he was willing enough. He was so full of his subject that it seemed impossible for him to put it clearly. He could give forth only meaningless and, apparently, unrelated phrases.

"It's been going on for weeks." And, still more vaguely: "It doesn't happen just in one room. I've changed the nursery twice, and it's always the same."

He had drawn a handkerchief (it was of silk, bordered with purple) from his pocket and was dabbing at minute particles of moisture which had sprung out upon his forehead, just below the thinning line of sleek black hair.

"I can't stand much more," he burst out. "Not that I'm afraid, you understand, but I get to thinking . . . don't sleep. If you'll just come to the house and see for yourself. . . ."

"When?" Hallowell asked, and Gessler answered avidly:

"Now—tonight. The nurse is going. She's leaving for good. Says she can't stand it any longer. I've offered her big money, more than twice what she can get anywhere else, but she won't stay another day. Brandt's sending a woman from the hospital."

So Brandt was sending one of his own nurses! That proved that he did take it—whatever it was—seriously, Hallowell thought. And also it proved that the trouble was with the child. Or was that only a ruse? Perhaps the nurse had orders to keep her eyes on Gessler himself. The fellow did look seedy. No doubt about it. Almost on the verge of collapse. His very corpulence seemed unhealthy, as though the flesh were slowly turning to water beneath that sallow skin. And yet, he had none of the symptoms of disease. His eyes were clear enough, and his lips were a good color, although he kept them constantly in motion, and his pale, fleshy tongue was perpetually darting out to moisten them. His hands, too, were never still. They were puffy hands, with carefully shaped nails that were shiny pink where the manicurist had used a colored polish; the backs were covered with coarse black hairs, oddly repulsive.

"THERE'S no use my trying to tell you about it here. Once you're at the house you'll see for yourself. Of course I know you charge more for a house call, but money's no object with me. I'm willing to pay anything. Anything in reason, I mean, of course."

There was something abject about Gessler, something servile and cringing, yet with a hint of sly craftiness, which grated on Hallowell unbearably. He was within an inch of refusing the request when his eye lighted upon Brandt's letter.

"I wish you would look into this, if only as a favor to me."

Hang it all! He couldn't say "no," when it was worded that way.

"Very well," he agreed curtly. "I'll look the child over. But there's no reason for my going tonight. Morning will be the best time."

"Morning's no good." Now that he had agreed to go, Hallowell saw that the other's attitude had subtly changed. He was no longer the supplicant but the employer. "No good at all. You'll have to come with me now. It's close to six, and it'll take half an hour to get to my place. That'll barely give us time. It always happens at seven."

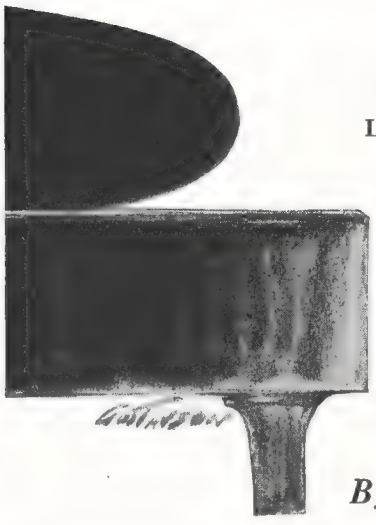
"It?"

"Yes. The thing I'm telling you about. That performance of the boy's."

"As a matter of fact, you've told me nothing," Hallowell said testily. "You haven't made it clear in the least. Just what does the child do?"

"Well . . ." Gessler was still loath to be explicit. His small, protuberant eyes darted about the office, lighting everywhere except on Hallowell's face. His hands fidgeted with the heavy gold watch chain which

Rhythm—maddening rhythm—beating into his brain. "You're trying to kill me—just as you said you would—but I don't believe in you—I don't believe—" the phantom tune played quietly on!



Illustrated by
L. R. Gustavson

By

By FLORENCE RYERSON *and* COLIN CLEMENTS

spanned his waistcoat. In the end he brought out: "He plays Pease Porridge Hot."

"*What?*"

"He plays Pease Porridge Hot—after he's put to bed at night. And other games, like Peekaboo and Simon Says Thumbs Up."

"But"—Hallowell fairly stuttered in his astonishment—"there's nothing abnormal about that. Quite the contrary. Fifty per cent of the babies of his age—two years, didn't you say?—play games or prattle to themselves before they go to sleep."

"It isn't to himself," Gessler said, and the other noticed that his difficulty in speaking had increased. "He talks . . . to his mother."

"But surely—" Hallowell was beginning, when Gessler interrupted.

"I thought you knew. I thought Brandt had told you in that letter. She . . . my wife . . . died six months ago."

GESSLER'S house, Hallowell discovered with a shock of surprise, was not only old but also very lovely. It was a three-story Georgian mansion of mellowed brick and white stone, with slender columns supporting a portico, and a roof of cool gray slate. There were flower boxes at the windows, and clipped yew trees in marble urns stood to left and right of the steps. The door was covered with an iron grill as lacelike and delicate in its workmanship as the setting for a jewel.

Absurd that a fellow like Gessler should possess such a house. Almost indecent, Hallowell felt. He was so obviously incapable of appreciating it. Even half apologized as he unlocked the door by muttering something under his breath about an apartment he was leasing uptown.

"But this is perfect," Hallowell told him as they stepped into the hall. "Perfect, why, it's—" He broke off, unable to put into words the feeling of bliss that was wrought in him by the exquisite curve of the stair, with its shining dark rail, the paneled white woodwork, which was not quite white but had a tender bloom upon it as though it were warmed by a hidden light.

"How did you ever find such a place?"

Again Gessler was vague. It had been in his wife's family, Hallowell made out. She had inherited it, very much run down, almost falling to pieces, in fact, and had insisted upon restoring it.

"A pretty penny it cost," Gessler said disconsolately. "We could have built two new houses for the same money—bang-up, modern ones. I told her so a hundred times."

"I'll wager you did," Hallowell thought grimly. He could fairly see the fellow telling her, his mean little mouth pursed between words into a puckered pink welt, like a scar upon his face. "Where's the child?" he asked abruptly, to rid himself of the vision.

"Upstairs. Nurse puts him to bed at this hour. We'll wait in the library. There ought to be a fire in there."

They passed through the arch at the left and Hallowell saw that the hall had not misled him into expecting too much. The room they were entering was as lovely as a dream. Some trick of line, of arrangement of windows and mirrors, gave it a feeling of limitless spaciousness. Upon two sides were books; the far walls were shadowed, half lost to view, except for a gleam here and there in the dimness where the polished surfaces of old wood, or glass, caught in the light of the blazing fire. Hallowell sensed rather than saw that every object, from the great piano in a far corner to the slender flask of carved jade upon a nearby table, had been selected with loving care.

Only Gessler seemed out of place. Against the background of books in dull blue, green, and gold, against the beautifully proportioned mantelpiece of creamy white wood, he seemed as gross, as repellent, as a slug that has wandered into a house through an open door. The room repudiated him. The whole house hated him. Hallowell felt it, as he sank into a deep chair by the fire and held out his hands to the blaze; it was as plain to his senses as though the very walls had screamed aloud. Did the man himself feel it?

Apparently not. He was engaged in pouring brandy from a decanter which a servant had brought in. Hallowell had declined, and the drink, a large one, was for himself. Might that not explain. . . ?

He caught Hallowell's eye on the glass and seemed to read his thoughts, for he laughed deprecatingly.

"I don't usually fill 'er up like this, but tonight—well, I need a bracer, and that's a fact. You'd be better off if you took one yourself."

Hallowell did not answer. His gaze had passed to the mantel and was resting upon a portrait which hung there.

"My wife," Gessler explained. "Done last year. I got Schatenstein. He's steep, but he's worth the price."

He was, Hallowell agreed, well worth it. The portrait was not only vividly alive but gave the feeling of being an uncanny likeness.

The woman in the picture was seated at a piano, her lovely slim hands resting upon the keys, wrists drooping, fingers still spread in a chord. Her shapely head with its crown of pale hair was turned over her shoulder, as though she had paused in the midst of her music to smile a little tender smile at some one sitting close by. The pose was so simple, so natural, that Hallowell half heard the last whisper of the chords still sounding under her fingers.

Hang it all, it wasn't imagination. He did hear it . . . the faint ghost, not of music, but of the lingering hush which follows after, when the vibrations have not yet been dispelled by other, harsher, sounds. It reminded him of something—a memory, far, far back in his life.

"She used to play a lot before we were married," Gessler broke in upon his thoughts. "No so much afterward. I don't like music, and she lost interest. Although, she used to sing for the baby sometimes. Had some crazy idea about training his ear. Schatenstein happened to catch her at it, and he painted her that way." He leaned forward and ran his hand over the white paneling of the wall. Watching him, Hallowell half expected a visible trail of slime to be left upon the wood, but he merely pressed a switch and lights blossomed overhead.

In the new brightness Hallowell saw that the hair in the portrait, which he had supposed ash-blond, was clear white.

Gessler read his thought again, an unpleasant faculty the man seemed to possess.

"It turned white," he said, "the year after we were married. I was always after her to get it dyed, but she wouldn't. She was funny that way . . ." He did not finish the speech, but left it suspended in the air, while he stiffened and stood, head still tilted back, in a listening attitude. Some one, Hallowell felt, had come into the room. Who it was he could not see because of the high back of the chair, but, plainly, Gessler had heard. Why did he not turn?

"The baby is in bed, sir."

GESSLER swung about with an audible sigh, almost a sob, of relief; and Hallowell bent over the arm of his chair to see the nurse, speaking from the door. She was middle-aged, and squarely built, with a broad face which was slightly flattened at the cheek bones. Not Irish, he thought, and certainly none of the Southern races, Danish, probably, or a Swede. She looked stolid and unimaginative. Not at all the sort to give up a good place (more than double pay, Gessler had said) for a small thing.

"He's in bed, sir," she repeated. "And if you'll watch over him I'll be getting my things together. The new nurse is coming at eight o'clock. I'd like to leave directly she comes."

"You can go," Gessler said shortly. "We'll take charge."

But when the woman was gone he seemed in no hurry. He lingered to pour himself another drink, to finish his cigarette, and to mend the fire, before he signalled Hallowell to follow.

Even then, his progress (*Please turn to page* 98)

The LINE-UP

A new department for MYSTERY readers! Write your opinions and suggestions for MYSTERY MAGAZINE every month. Tell us what story you like best—who your favorite mystery writer is. For every letter published we will pay one dollar. And, remember, if you don't like this magazine, be frank and say so! Write to the MYSTERY Editor, Tower Magazines, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

The People vs. MYSTERY

DETROIT, MICH.—Silence in the courtroom, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury: It now becomes my duty to charge you to render your verdict in the case of the People of the World against THE MYSTERY MAGAZINE. You must be governed by your own experience in reading this MYSTERY MAGAZINE. Whether or not it is guilty

Silence in the courtroom. The Jury has come to a verdict, THE MYSTERY MAGAZINE, is GUILTY of being the very best hair-raising and thrilling MYSTERY MAGAZINE in the WORLD.

Congratulations to Mr. Alan S. Hays, for the wonderful series he is now beginning to write on, "What Is Wrong with Justice?"

As an author of thrilling mystery stories, Sax Rohmer is quite a favorite of mine. Let us have some more thrillers, Sax Rohmer.

Editor, please forget the suggestion (in the Line-up) from the lady who suggested short stories instead of the book-length novels, in the October issue. Those book-length novels keep me in suspense for hours.

What more can I say than this: Your MYSTERY MAGAZINE is the best magazine that I have ever read, and I only wish that it was published every week.

Mrs. Elizabeth C. Mills.

From Our Betters

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.—In my law practice I read thousands of pages of briefs, law-books and abstracts. My mind sometimes gets in a whirl. I then take up MYSTERY MAGAZINE and read it through, stories and advertisements. This gives me rest.

It seems to me that some mysteries fit into my conclusions in my prosaic practice. I have no prejudices and will not attempt to discriminate among authors. Some stories have more technique than others and other stories have a soothing effect on readers like myself. I read for rest, not to pose as a literary critic. I am grateful to MYSTERY for publishing such a magazine. It has a place among all classes of readers.

R. J. Hubbard.

Goodness!

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The clock chimed midnight. The shadows past the radius of my reading lamp assumed weird grotesque shapes that seemed to leer and beckon to me. Eyes peered at me through the curtain edge. The wind moaned drearily and then the night became so still I seemed to be the only human alive in the world.

"If Tom would only come home," I said aloud. My voice sounded strange in the depressing quiet. My eyes again sought the page in front of me and the words hypnotized me with dread and horror. I tried to put aside the magazine and couldn't. The creatures in the story seemed to come alive and crouch around me, forcing me to continue.

And then the door knob rattled. There was something so sinister about the sound, panic gripped me. I tried to scream but no sound came from my parched lips. Fear paralyzed me.

The knob rattled again. It sounded like the bones of a skeleton clacking. My toes curled and every hair on my head stood up. Chills ran up and down my spine. I moaned softly.

And then a familiar voice called. "Hurry and let me in, Dear. I've lost my key."

Silly? Sure it's silly but haven't you felt just this way when you were reading a Sax Rohmer story, alone, late at night? I'll bet you have. And that is just why I like MYSTERY. Why it is the finest magazine of its kind published.

Editor, I congratulate you.

Frances Argent.

"I Love You Truly"

GRAND VIEW, TENN.—MYSTERY MAGAZINE is, in my estimation, the most entertaining and instructive magazine on the market today. We find the newsstands so littered with a flood of magazines and book publications, with a sex trend, that it is a positive pleasure to find one clean, wholesome magazine that one may read without being compelled to slip it under the cushions of the davenette when he hears his sister approaching.

Another reason for my infatuation

(*Please turn to page* 136)

THE POWERFUL, FRANK STORY OF A GANGSTER BY A GANGSTER!

Protection

I lost no time in getting May on the wire. "Where were you last night, Jack?" she demanded. I tried to stall for time. "Why?" I asked indifferently.

A TWO-PART STORY—PART TWO

SEATED at the Club one evening, I was playing cards with four men who were very much ill at ease. Two of them were drug addicts and the other two were Italian youths of about eighteen years of age. Longing to be gunmen, these two kids had worked their way into the mob and were quite willing to do anything to show how tough they were.

These were the type of fools that were used to do the rough stuff. The two junkies, for this is what drug addicts were called by my mob, had been "on the habit" for so long that they were using a heavy charge to get any reaction from the drug. This cost money and the boys were quite willing to earn it in any way they could. The two kids were just a couple of young fools that the Boss could send out on any kind of a job when the old-timers put up a kick. If the kids were caught they would keep their mouths shut even if the mouthpiece, or rather, lawyer, could not spring them. I have known as many as five that went to the chair thinking they were heroes, while the bunch at the Club called them chumps.

This night these four men were uneasy. At one o'clock in the morning they were going to give a beer truck the works. The orders were to knock off both the driver and the helpers if possible. Why?—Oh just a little argument between the Big Shot and another district boss. This other boss didn't think he needed to pay for any protection for his beer trucks when they went through our district, but this would teach him a good lesson. The driver and helpers might not appreciate it but that could not be helped.

IT was nearly midnight and the driver of the car in which the boys were to do the job had not yet arrived. One of the kids fumbled with his cards for a moment.

"Where the hell is Mike? He ought to have been here long ago. Damn that mug, I'll bet he shows up at the last minute, stewed to the eyes."

"Keep your shirt on, kid," I answered, "he'll be here any minute now. You've got lots of time, it only takes twenty minutes to get to the spot. You're not getting nervous, are you?"

"Sure I am," answered the kid, "you know I'm all right when the work starts but this hanging around gets my goat."

"Aw, take it easy," snapped one of the junkies," dis job is gonna be a push-over. There ain't no follow-up car behind the truck and all we got to do is nail the bums on the front. Y'er gittin' paid good money fer the job, aintcha?"

"Wait a minute, fellows," I said. "I'll go in and see if the Boss knows where Mike is."

"I know where he hangs out," said the junkie. "I can call up Joe Grippo and he'll get him for me."

"All right, Benny," I said, "that's a good idea, you call him up while I speak to the Boss."

I left them arguing and went into the back office.

THE editors of MYSTERY MAGAZINE present the only "big-shot" gangster who ever left the racket and lived! With his own peculiar, individual style, this man, whose name must be withheld for obvious reasons, tells the dramatically intense story, terrifying in its simple directness, of the life of a young man forced into crime. As you read this amazing disclosure the editors request you to bear in mind that this is fact—not fiction!

"Everybody keepa quiet," Joe ordered. "Jack—he's a talk; you lissen."

"Say, Frank," I started, as I walked up to the Big Shot, "Where the hell is——"

"Oh my God," he answered, before I could finish my question, "are those punks out there getting screwy all ready?"

"You're damn right they are and if Mike doesn't show up pretty soon the kids will be crying all over the place."

"Well, what do you want me to do, go out there and hold their hands?"

"No, I don't; but listen, Frank, if Mike isn't here in another fifteen minutes you better get another driver."

"Say, Jack, the way you talk you would think that I had a couple of drivers in each pocket. There isn't a guy in the place that I can send on that job except Mike."

"That's just the trouble, Mike isn't in the place and I'll bet you ten bucks he doesn't show."

By this time the Big Shot was getting mad, but as I stood in very strong with him it didn't worry me. He jumped to his feet and paced up and down the office for a moment, then continued his tirade.

"If you're so damn smart, why don't you drive them yourself?"

It was quite a while since I had done anything of this kind in the organization as I was now considered the personal secretary to the Big Shot. This remark threw me into a fit of anger and I flared back at him:

"All right, Frank, if that's an order, it's O. K. with me."

I walked back into the Club and called to the four men with whom I had been talking.

"Come on, mugs, you've got the best damn driver in Brooklyn shoving a car for you tonight."

"Hey, Jack," said Benny, "I couldn't get Grippo on the wire, the girl said something about his phone—I don't know what it was."

"Ah, the hell with you and Grippo," I answered, "you're so hopped up you don't know what you're talking about."

With this off my chest I walked out of the Club and as I seated myself behind the wheel I heard the Big Shot calling to me.

"Come back here, Jack, come here, you damn fool."

BUT I paid no attention and shot the car along at about thirty miles an hour to the spot picked for the job. It was not quite one o'clock when we reached our destination, so I circled the block a few times and tried out the car to see how fast it was on the get-away and pick-up. It had been stolen that same day for this particular job and it was a good one. The plates were also stolen, but from a car which was lying idle in a garage. This was done so that there would be no alarm out for a car carrying this license number. One of the kids was sitting beside me and the other three were in the back of the sedan. The windows were down and the boys anxiously scanned the street.

"There she is," said one of the men in the back, "that's the truck coming down the avenue. Do you see it?"

"Of course I see it," I answered, "and I can hear you, too, so stop shouting. Now get this straight—Benny, you take the guy on the far side; Joe, you take the guy next to him; and Paul, you get the driver."

Turning to the kid next to me I put my hand on his shoulder.

"You, Tony, keep your eye open for anyone following the truck and don't go pegging away with that gun until I tell you."

I pulled out of the side street as the truck passed in front of us and slowly followed it for one block.

"Remember now, you guys, don't start the music until we get right alongside of the driver's seat—then do your stuff."

Hardly had I spoken when we reached the center of the truck and a moment later as the driver came into view the boys in the back of the car opened up. It was all over in less than thirty seconds and I stepped on the gas as the truck swerved to the sidewalk and dashed into a store front. I was about to swing into the next side street, when to my surprise, a police flivver with two cops in it came tearing out of this same street.

Here was a hell of a spot to be in. These cops were supposed to be at the other end of their run, according to the information that the Big Shot had given me. But where they were supposed to be was not going to help me any just then. Seeing our car, the cop at the wheel tried to do a hero act and pulled directly across the road in front of us. That left just one thing for me to do: give it the gas and head right for him. An instant before the cars would have crashed, I swung up onto the sidewalk in front of the flivver and passed his bumper with about an inch to spare. We were past the car in an instant, but during that instant, the kid alongside of me opened up on the cop sitting next to the driver. Of course this cop had been chopping away at us with his gun but he had not done any damage and with their car turned crossways in the street, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to lose them before they could get straightened out. But the damn fool next to me had lost his head and now we were in a jam.

Killing cops is not a healthy pastime in Brooklyn. It has been done many times but usually some one burns for it. I was raving like a maniac as I swung the car around a corner and straightened out for a two block run. In a case like this the best way to duck is to make a straight run a few blocks and then swing a corner. The car is never going faster than sixty miles per hour and usually at a speed a great deal less than this.

Illustrations by
HENRY LUHRS

SOMEWHERE in the distance another car was taking up the chase but thanks to the squalling of the siren, I was able to keep away from it. Police whistles were blowing but I did not mind them. It probably helped to confuse any cop that would have been of any use, so it was all right with me. Up one street and down another, doubling and twisting, I drove for about fifteen minutes. As I swung around one corner I noticed that there was no one in the block ahead of me. I slowed down to twenty-five miles per hour and did some fast talking.

"Here's where you punks unload. Split up and walk to the subway station. Two of you grab a street car and get the hell out of this neighborhood. You, Tony, go with Paul and ditch that rod as soon as you can. I'll follow both of you to the corner. Come on, get going."

They scrambled out of the car and we left it just where it was. The two junkies went one way and the two kids started up the block ahead of me. We were quite a way from the shooting and the street was as quiet as it should have been at one-fifteen in the morning. I was only a few yards behind the kids when we came to the corner and as a cop leisurely turned into the street, whistling to himself and swinging his stick, I'll admit that my heart skipped a few beats. It was just a coincidence and the cop would probably have looked us over casually and kept on going if it had not been for the kid with the itchy trigger finger.

Tony jerked out his gun and blazed away at the cop. The bullets must have struck him in the leg and stomach, for he jerked forward spasmodically, tore at his leg with wildly clutching hands and pitched forward on his face. His body continued to jerk and twitch for a moment and then stiffened as blood gushed from his mouth.

I HAD just about all of these two maniacs that I wanted for one night. The only cop I wanted killed in Brooklyn was Mike Kennedy, not these guys. I ran for the next corner just as fast as my legs would carry me. As I turned the corner, I looked back just in time to see the two fools hail a passing cab and threaten the driver with their guns. Another cop must have heard the shot and investigated, for once again the police whistles started their shrill cries.

I hurried along for about ten blocks and paused in front of an Italian grocery store. The windows in the apartment above the store were brilliantly lighted. Here was a piece of luck. Joe Grippo, who owned the store, must still be awake, for he lived in the apartment above. I stepped into the hallway and rang the bell. In a minute Joe came to the head of the stairs and, seeing me, quickly came down to meet me.

"Allo, my friend; say, this is fine, you come to pay me a visit—come up, come up—"

"Wait a minute, Joe, not so loud," I said as I put my finger to my lips and pointed over my shoulder with the thumb on my other hand. Joe knew his sign language and immediately pushed the button that put out the light in the hall.

"Speak, my friend, tell me what is wrong?" said Joe.

"Whose upstairs with you?" I asked.

"Just my wife, my brudder, and his wife. They have supper with us and pretty soon they are gone home."

"Hell!" I answered, "Two women, that's not so good. I don't mind your wife, but your brother Louey's wife, how about her? Can she keep her mouth shut?"

"Shooes, Jack, I'm tellin' ya, none of them speak, come on upstairs."

We mounted the stairs and entered the apartment. Joe's wife came to greet me and you would have thought that I was a long lost son returning to his home.

"My boy Jack," she cried, "I have not seen you for a long time; gimme your hat, sit down, have a glass of wine."

Joe interrupted her with upraised hand.

"Shooes, Mama, shooes, you no talk; Jack, he's a talk, you lissen. You, too, Louey—everybody keep quiet."

I stood facing the four in the center of the room.

"Now listen, Joe, I had supper with you people. I came into your store at about half-past five tonight. Now think hard, was there anybody in your store at half-past five?"

"Shooes. I think Mrs. Morelli come in about that time, but that's all. Nobody else until six o'clock."

"All right, then, it was a quarter to six. I came in to sell you these two tickets for the Club's dance. Here, put them in your pocket now—while I was talking to you, you asked me, 'Why don't I stay for supper?'—then I asked you—'What are you gonna have for supper?'—By the way, what did you have for supper?"

"Oh, Jack, same like you like, too, veal and peppers."

"That's good. I'll remember that easy. I guess you had spaghetti and meat balls first, didn't you?"

Mrs. Grippo, who had been all attention, now spoke up.

"Yes, my boy, always at night we have macaroni."

"Yeah, I know you do, you always have wine with your meal and bread sticks at night; well—let's see, that's straight then. Joe, you asked me to stay for supper and I said all right. Then you told me to go upstairs, but say, Joe—how did you know it was a quarter to six?"

Joe replied, "Who me? How I know? Why every night Mrs. Morelli comes in at half-past five. The same time every night to get stuff for supper. Besides my belly tell me it getta near supper time. I eat at seven o'clock."

"That's great, Joe. Now Mrs. Grippo, how do you know it was about quarter to six when I came upstairs?"

"Me, how I know?" answered Mrs. (*Please turn to page* 56)

As I turned the corner, I looked back just in time to see the two fools hail a cab, and threaten the driver with their guns.

By ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE

"While the cat's away, the mice will play—" and Lois and Dirck continue to match wits with wily Inspector Crolius. Slowly, but surely, however, they are being drawn into the inevitable trap that awaits them, in spite of their brilliant plans!

JEWEL Jugglers

CHIEF INSPECTOR CROLIUS, of the customs service, sustained a compound fracture of the right leg, just below the thigh. This, from slipping on a bit of ice as he was leaving his office for the day. The ice was on the curb. The fall sent Crolius sprawling out into the street. There a fast-moving truck passed over his leg; before the machine could stop or swerve and before he could roll clear of it. Hence the bad fracture.

The inspector's official position made the accident of just enough news value to warrant a dozen lines on an inside page of one of the afternoon papers. Over the dinner table of their cozy flat, Dirck Harrod read aloud the item to Lois.

"He's a heavy man," mused Dirck, "and a tall man. He won't be on his feet and off crutches for another nine weeks, at the very least. It will be more than two months before he can get out of his rooms and get back on the job. That means you and I must 'get on the job', by the first boat out. It would be foolish to pass up a heaven-sent chance like this. And it will save us all the bother and extra work of starting from New Orleans and coming home by way of Halifax. We can scrap that cumbrous plan of ours, here and now; and take the simplest way. A way that's as safe as a church. How about it?"

"Oh, dear!" sighed Lois. "I do wish I didn't get that queer little thrill, whenever we're really about to go into action! Ordinarily, I loathe this wretched work of ours. But when a gorgeous chance, like this one, breaks for us——"

"You're right it's a 'gorgeous chance'," approved Dirck Harrod. "Crolius was making the New York port too hot for us. And he'd remember our faces. He's got it in for us, and he means to hang on till he lands us—which he won't! A fairly clever ten-year-old child could hornswiggle the ordinary run of his subs—the men who'll be in charge while he's laid up. It's our big opportunity. Start the packing, won't you, while I do some phoning?"

ONE day, some four weeks later, when the Holland-American liner, *Statendam*, docked at its Hoboken pier, Customs Inspector Rabinowitz had a mild experience which served him long for a laugh-evoking story among his friends; and which gave him a brand new and galling weapon in his endless controversy with his wife as to the superiority of men's brains over women's.

Here, somewhat abbreviated, is the merry tale he told Mrs. Rabinowitz when he returned home that evening:

"One of the second-class she-passengers that was sawed off onto me today was a little mite of a dame, not much older'n a kid and with baby blue eyes two sizes too big for her face. Plenty easy she was to look at. But, Lord, what a boob! Get this:

"What d'you s'pose she'd brought home with her from Amsterdam, as a present for her husband? Two boxes of Corona Corona cigars, fifty to the box. Get that? From Amsterdam, mind you! Don't you get it, even yet? Why those cigars have got to be imported to Holland, in the first place, from Cuba. And they pay a fat duty.

"So when this girl buys them in Amsterdam, she's got to pay a lot more than if she'd waited and bought them right here in New York. See the point? Instead

Photo by
TOWER STUDIOS

The pretty passenger inquired frantically if her luggage had arrived. It had not. There were advance tips, and much futile search.

of bringing him home some Dutch gewgaw, she hunts around there till she finds a Dutch shop that sells Corona Coronas. She buys them, and she must have paid a fortune for them. And she lugged them all the way back to the States as a cute surprise for dear stay-at-home hubby. Say, I just had to laugh, right in her face, when I saw them!

"Of course, everyone's entitled to bring in a hundred foreign cigars, free of duty. So she didn't have anything extra to pay on them at the pier. She had declared them, besides. When I tried to put her wise about the bonehead stunt she'd pulled. she just stiffens up and says to me, she says: 'That's the brand my husband likes best, when he can afford them,' she says. 'So I know they'll please him,' she says. Please him! More likely he's giving her the loud ha-ha, right now, for being such a sap. Talk about women having as much sense as men? Buying Cuban cigars in Holland and bringing them all the way back to America for a present!"

But Inspector Rabinowitz got a shock when he went to see his chief soon after Crolius had returned from the hospital. Rabinowitz thought his little story would entertain the man who was fretting at his enforced idleness.

Before the story was ended, Crolius let out a roar.

"I'll have their necks!" he shouted. "I'll bet that your little dumb cluck was the moll of the guy who has been making fools of me—us——"

"Now, Chief," soothed the deputy——

"Don't now me!" thundered Crolius—"Why in hell didn't you look inside those cigars? I'll be eternally condemned if they didn't conceal a fortune in gems—Damn this leg—I want to be after 'em—and I'll get 'em, too. I will!"

And Crolius was right in his suspicion for the husband—one Dirck Harrod—received the cigars with eager delight.

After which, Lois and Dirck put them to a use which would have wrung a gasp of horror from any devotee of a good smoke. Behind the locked doors of their own apartment they spread a wide white cloth on a bed. Then deftly, each wielding a sharp little knife, they split the cigars lengthwise; holding them above the cloth.

Some of the eviscerated cigars were Havana tobacco, throughout. But a scattered minority of them had a long and bumpy core of oiled silk in their centers.

And each lump in each core was made by a sizable first-water diamond.

Cleverly had a Dutch ex-cigarmaker opened and filled and rerolled the Corona Corona cigars which had cost Lois such a pretty penny—and which had afforded Inspector Rabinowitz such a pretty theme for mirth. Beyond the initial price paid by her for the two boxes, at an Amsterdam tobacco-importer's, the hundred cigars had presently been worth a trifle more than $175,000.

DIRCK figured carefully on the time when Crolius might be expected to be again on the job. There was an instinct, a feeling in Harrod that Crolius was to be feared—that a duel was being fought silently, secretly between them which transcended the ordinary battle of wits between the law and the crook. Therefore as he wanted to make the most of the enforced vacation of Crolius he took (*Please turn to page* 102)

Photos by
TOWER STUDIOS

"Sergeant!"
Maria shrilled.
"Must I talk the fool?
He asks me if I have ever
seen the pyramids of Mexico!"

DEATH on WHEELS

IT was Babe Escobar, of Vera Cruz, the world-famous automobile racing driver and Broadway hotspot luminary and gambler, who met death from below and this is the story of his murder; but also it is the story of Ashel Mayhew of Huntsdale, Mo., and while the story of the murder of Babe Escobar is sensational, the story of Ashel Mayhew, who was involved, is unparalleled in the long criminal history of the City of New York. And to make the picture complete, there is also Maria Gomez, the beauteous, the dancer who had set New York by its ears, and there is Detective-Sergeant Vincent Graney, youngest of his rank on the metropolitan force, and there is Caroline, daughter of Ashel Mayhew.

The beginning was a year before the murder of Babe Escobar, with the famous Byron case.

This Byron, as everyone knows, was the banker who made the tactical mistake of using his customers' accounts for speculative purposes without notifying the customers. Therefore, when several of them demurred upon receiving information of the transactions, Byron mysteriously disappeared. Completely and mysteriously disappeared and none of the conjurations of the New York police could produce him.

Enter, then, Ashel Mayhew, of Huntsdale, Mo.

Now back in Huntsdale, this Ashel Mayhew was considered of no great shakes. In his long and checkered career—he was, at the time, in his middle forties—Ashel had succeeded in making a glorious failure of everything he had set his hand to. A very imaginative gentleman, he had been a coffee grower in South America; he had been a miner in Mexico; he had been a sugar planter in Cuba; he had been a broker; he had been a lawyer in Huntsdale, Mo. He had been many other things and with each he had contrived to fail.

BUT it has been observed that while a rolling stone gathers no moss it acquires polish. In Ashel Mayhew's case, this was not strictly the fact, but if polish were wanting, knowledge was not. Ashel Mayhew had acquired information in the aggregate; he had become a walking almanac. His talents as a linguist—he had the parrot-like facility for imitation—were extensive; his various pursuits and their accompanying correspondence courses had taught him numerous and curious things. But at the time Mr. Byron made off with his customers' accounts, he had discovered nothing to which he might apply his extensive knowledge.

In only one thing had he succeeded. There was Caroline, his daughter, a young woman with peach skin, corn-colored hair, lithe body and wide, innocent, china-blue eyes. Mrs. Mayhew was gone the way of all flesh; she lay tranquilly in the Huntsdale cemetery, stable and secure at last.

A year had gone by since the eminent Mr. Byron had dropped from New York's view and it was Summer and

By HENRY LaCOSSITT

An unparalleled murder mystery in the long criminal history of a great metropolis. The story of Ashel Mayhew of Huntsdale, Mo., beautiful Maria Gomez, the toast of New York, and the hideous death from below!

in Huntsdale, Mo., Ashel Mayhew was making his way down the dusty street to watch the Kansas City train go through. But on his way he discovered that Egbert Hornback, who ran the feed store, had a new clerk. So Ashel let the Kansas City train go hang. He liked to talk and here was a virgin field. He talked to the clerk. The clerk was elderly and most un-clerk-like. Also, his speech was not that of a Missourian, although he informed Ashel that he was a native of the Ozark country. Likewise, his beard bothered him and his hands were white and soft. Hence Ashel pondered. The clerk's accent he identified immediately as New York or New England. Therefore, Ashel, who read the papers from the weather forecast to the last want ad, and who had an annoying memory, took steps. The clerk, in handling Egbert Hornback's grain and feed, left many finger-prints, so Ashel, who had become an expert photographer in his many trades, took some pictures. These pictures he forwarded to the police of New York and in three days the clerk at Egbert Hornback's feed store, who proved to be none other than Mr. Byron, missing banker, was arrested.

Ashel Mayhew was as surprised as anybody, but he had an idea. He always had ideas. He accepted the handsome reward, but he made a request.

This was that he might be allowed to come to New York and work on a case with the police.

NOW ordinarily such a request would elicit nothing but boisterous mirth and would be forgotten, but this is an age of trips. Win a hog-calling contest and you go to Washington to shake hands with the Secretary of Agriculture; head your class at Siwash and you are sent to Athens to study antiquities. Therefore, it is not too surprising—though it is quite unprecedented—that the Police Commissioner of New York, though amused, no doubt, yet acceded to Ashel's audacious request. Perhaps, also, the Commissioner was a bit curious and a little ashamed.

At any rate, on the morning of June 9th, Ashel Mayhew and Caroline, his daughter, amid cheers, boarded a bus at Huntsdale and set out for New York.

They arrived in New York the morning of June 12th; meanwhile the metropolis had flamed with sensation.

This was because, on the night of June 10th, Babe Escobar met death from below. This Escobar was a Mexican and lived in the fashionable community of Riverview at the extreme northern limit of the city with his sister, Maria Gomez, the dancer, and his man, Julio, a beetle-browed peon from Chihuahua.

On the night in question, with Maria perform-

ing her exotic gyrations at the Tivoli, Babe Escobar left his handsome stone house at nine o'clock bound for Times Square. He had with him, said Julio, a roll of ten thousand dollars—nothing surprising, for he was known to be a heavy player—besides his diamond-and-platinum wrist watch and a huge diamond ring he never was without. Julio saw him out of the door, watching him down the walk toward the garage, then went back into the house after Escobar had disappeared in the shrubbery.

At ten minutes past twelve Maria Gomez—she had changed her name for theatrical purposes, she said—arrived home and was attracted by the sound of a running motor in the garage. Investigating, she discovered the notorious Babe. He was seated in his sixteen-cylinder roadster, slumped over the wheel. The left door was open, the motor running.

When Maria found him he was as dead as last Friday's fish.

The extraordinary part of the business was that he had been shot from below. The bullet, a .38, had entered his head between the point of his chin and the angle of his neck and had traveled upward in an almost exact perpendicular. It was found imbedded in the timbered ceiling of the garage.

The police scratched their heads. For how in the name of sanity had that been done? Beneath the car, there was the usual pool of oily slime, but there was no imprint of body or feet or hands.

The only thing was a curious double track, two parallel lines that seemed to have come from the wall, at right angles to the car, entering the skirts of the oil, and then, beside the car, running toward the door, fading out on the concrete driveway to the street.

This double track the police viewed askance, then ignored it as it seemed utterly meaningless. What they did consider, and consider thoroughly, was the fact that Babe Escobar's jewelry and money were missing. Also, they considered the fact that Babe Escobar was a member of the sporting world and even the lower strata of that world and they rounded up a number of gentlemen of Broadway. They quizzed and they queried and Sergeant Graney of the Homicide Squad was in charge.

They made statements, all gobbled by a hungry press, and it was said that Babe Escobar died with a look of indescribable horror on his face, but June 12th dawned and solution was no nearer. Moreover, the Commissioner was making caustic comments to Sergeant Graney.

Therefore, on the morning of June 12th, Sergeant Graney, much harassed, sat in his office questioning Maria Gomez. The temperature of his neck was high. for he had received a letter from the Commissioner that morning. Likewise, Maria worried him.

Sergeant Graney was young, red-haired, blue-eyed, quite husky and impressionable. Maria Gomez was young, sleek-haired, dark and liquid of eye, voluptuous of figure, dusky and sensuous of skin. She waved a a scrap of paper wildly before Sergeant Graney.

"*Madre de Dios!*" she wailed. "It is I who am next!"

Graney took the paper.

"I am not finished," he read. "Look out below."

It was printed in indelible pencil.

HE looked up, troubled, remembering the look of terrified horror on Babe Escobar's face.

"What's this mean?" he asked.

"Mean!" cried Maria. "Mean! *Por Dios!* Is it that you are a kind of idiot, Sergeant? Does it not mean that I am next?"

Sergeant Graney didn't—frankly—know. He hoped not. As a precaution he had a squad of men at the Escobar house and Maria Gomez—the show must go on! she said—was being escorted to and from the theater at her own request.

"When'd it come?"

"This morning."

"How?"

"In the post."

Graney studied the note, laid it aside. "Did he have any enemies?"

Enemies! But yes! Who did not have enemies? Though she knew none of them. Babe, *pobrecito*, had told her little.

It was at that moment that a patrolman came to the door.

"Sarjint," said the patrolman, "that—that cluck from Mizzoury's here."

Graney ran exasperated fingers through bristling hair. This, besides Maria, was responsible for the temperature of his neck. The letter from the Commissioner that lay in his desk had informed him that Ashel Mayhew would work on the Escobar case and that the sergeant was to give him all aid and assistance.

The sergeant made soft animal noises and profanity with his firm mouth. Who ever had heard of such a thing? Besides, the Commissioner had been pointedly and sarcastically humorous concerning the sergeant's ability and Graney did not in the least appreciate the humor. Nevertheless, he obeyed. He bade the patrolman show in Mr. Mayhew.

There came to the door two people, a man and a young woman. The man was tall, gaunt, bronzed and preternaturally wrinkled. He had gray eyes, very mild, which gleamed beneath bushy, rusty brows. His clothes were loose and worn.

But he seemed as calm and as at ease as if Sergeant Graney's stern office were thrice familiar in his life.

The girl was tall, statuesque, with peach skin and corn-colored hair and china-blue eyes, and she smiled innocently at Graney.

"I am Ashel Mayhew," said the man.

Graney snorted. "That's terrific," he said.

"And this is my daughter." Ashel smiled pleasantly.

Graney looked at the note, glanced at Maria Gomez, who was staring blankly, looked again at the note.

"It don't say anything about a daughter," grumbled Graney.

"I know," said Ashel Mayhew, "but we just got in and until I get her properly stached, she won't be a bit o' bother, Mistuh Graney." Ashel advanced and pumped the sergeant's hand. Caroline took a chair. Graney looked at her again and encountered her innocent smile. He decided to let her stay.

"Now," said Ashel, pulling a bundle of newspapers from his sagging pocket, "this Escobar case——"

"Uh, huh," said Graney sarcastically, "you're helpin' me?"

"That's it," said Ashel. "And you can depend on me, Mistuh Graney. I know all about it. Now——"

"Since," snapped Graney, "you know all about it, I guess you know this is Miss Maria Gomez, Escobar's sister."

Ashel turned grave eyes on the exotic Maria. The exotic Maria sniffed audibly. Ashel reached in his coat pocket and drew therefrom a pair of steel spectacles, which he donned, then inclined his head and looked over them at her.

"I'm right pleased," he said. He introduced his daughter, dropped into a chair before Graney's desk. Again he seemed quite at home.

"MISS GOMEZ," said Ashel, "isn't your brother the same Escobar that won from Tommy Balfour back in '28?"

Maria turned her black eyes on Ashel in a frown.

"Yes," she said. "And what of that?"

"Nothin'. Nothin' at all. Just gettin' placed. . . . Wasn't that the race Tommy smashed up in?"

"Yes."

"What happened to Tommy?"

Graney snorted again. "What's that got to do with it?"

"Nothin'. Nothin' at all, I guess. Just gettin' placed. I read the papers a lot, you know." He grinned, lit a cigar that filled the room with an odor something like that of a smoldering bath towel. "You know——" he continued imperturbably—"where Tommy is now?"

The dancer's frown grew stormy. "No! He was Babe's—*pobrecito*—best friend, but," she shrugged, "he is hurt in the race. We never see him after. It is said he left the country."

"Hm-m-m," said Ashel. (*Please turn to page* 131)

Tower Studios

Animation shows in her sparkling eyes, her rosy cheeks and bright lips—Our Mystery Vivacious Type uses make-up as a clever ally.

The VIVACIOUS TYPE

BY PAMELA PINKERTON

PERHAPS her features aren't regular and you might not call her figure divine but she's much more attractive than any expressionless Venus because she's brimming over with life and gaiety; she's sparkling with animation and wit; she's a bright and colorful addition to any party scene.

Of course she's made the most of her beauty points and certainly she doesn't bulge in the wrong places or become suddenly lean where there should be curves. She's full of enthusiasm but she isn't a rah-rah girl. She's clever but doesn't allow herself to be too clever or let her wit make enemies for her. She knows when to sparkle and when to be silent but she is never dull.

Our Miss Vivacious is a medium brunette with dark brown hair and a lovely light golden skin, flashing brown eyes and an attractively curving mouth. She is of medium height and carries no excess weight but seems slimmer than she is because she carries herself so well and moves with a quick and easy grace. This is the type of girl who knows the fine points of make-up and uses them unhesitatingly. She knows and studies make-up colors and chooses the shades that suit her best for each occasion. She knows that she can wear a more vivid lipstick than can other types, should always wear rouge and should use eye shadow sparingly.

And she realizes perhaps more than her sisters that make-up is an art that deserves as careful study as any other art if it is to result in a masterpiece.

Natural effects are sought under modern make-up codes but at the same time much more make-up is used to achieve them. Every nuance of a normal, beautiful skin is duplicated now with make-up and the effect does not need to be artificial, merely because nature is improved upon.

Your make-up kit should include at least two shades of powder—one for daytime and one for evening—two shades of rouge; two or more lipsticks; mascara and eyebrow pencil. If, in addition, you have other shades of powder, both cream rouge and dry rouge and a full complement of lip rouges, you can have a grand time in front of your mirror.

And that mirror should be a triple mirror so that you can see the effect of your make-up from the side as well as from the front. It will be of particular value in placing your rouge if you will remember that rouge which looks well from the front may appear spotty and poorly blended in profile.

A combination of cream and dry rouge will give the best effect. The cream rouge should be applied before powdering and blended into the skin. Then the dry rouge may be applied over the (*Please turn to page* 113)

DINNER'S READY— *Uncle Sam!*

By
ANNE MORTON

Keystone

Oysters on their way to your holiday dinner.

Ewing Galloway

It's the busiest week of the year in the great city markets.

Ewing Galloway

Unloading chestnuts and other holiday food from an Italian liner.

THE oysters that will go into your first-course cocktail or help to stuff your turkey were "planted" four and a half or five years ago. For fifty-four-odd months they have been shielded from contamination as carefully as we shield our own babies—and jealously protected from starfish and other gluttonous creatures who seek to devour them.

The bogs from which your Christmas cranberries are taken have been drained and artificially flooded for years at precisely the right intervals to produce fruit of the finest texture, flavor and color. For decades some of these bogs have been under cultivation, protected from severe frost in Winter, insects in Summer and from fire during the dry seasons.

Thousands of poultrymen have brought their best thought and hardest labor to the task of raising your Christmas turkey. During the last two weeks of the bird's career, it will be kept in a special turkey "hotel" somewhere in Oklahoma or Texas to be fed on the most agreeable fare at regular two-hour intervals.

Nuts and raisins, figs, dates, apples and other fruit—potatoes, onions, celery, and turnips—mince-meat, cider, and plum pudding have all received specialized attention.

Publishers Photo Service

Rich acres in Hood River Valley, Oregon, yield your Christmas apples.

Your Christmas dinner was begun months—even years—ago. Hundreds of thousands of experts have worked to make the feast complete.

For information about recipe circulars, please turn to page 100.

Publishers Photo Service

California produces some of our finest holiday potatoes.

Ewing Galloway

Railroad trains and motor trucks speed your Christmas feast.

Ewing Galloway

The quality of your vegetables is checked by a city inspector.

And all this work has been beautifully timed so that on December 25, Uncle Sam and his family may sit down to a perfect feast. Carloads and truckloads of turkeys will be soon on their way from the West to eastern markets. Barrels and boxes of cranberries will take their long journey from Massachusetts to the Pacific Coast. Oysters from the Atlantic and Pacific coasts will be carried to the four corners of the land and Italian chestnuts, Russian caviar, Dutch cheeses and other old-world luxuries will be brought to port on great ocean liners.

It's a great big order for Christmas dinner for which Uncle Sam pays a surprisingly reasonable price—much less than he would have paid ten or twenty years ago.

Looking at the subject in this large way, what the housewife has to do in the kitchen is a very small task indeed. But it's none the less important—and to help the good work along, we have arranged a special set of Christmas dinner circulars containing recipes from experts all over the country. Here they are:

1. First-course dishes.
2. Meats for Christmas.
3. Up-todate stuffings.
4. Christmas vegetables.
5. Christmas salads.
6. Christmas beverages.
7. Holiday desserts.
8. Christmas sweets.

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(*Continued from page 47*

Grippo. "I know it's that time 'cause 'm makin' the supper."

At this time Joe's brother had to put in his two cents worth.

"Say Jack, I know it's pretty near six o'clock 'cause I'm gettin hungry, too."

"Now, of course, we all know it's Wednesday," I continued, "because that's the day you come to visit your brother, isn't it, Louey?"

"Shooes, shooes, that's right," Louey answered.

"Now when I came in the door, you offered me a glass of wine and Louey and I sat and listened to the radio while the two women went in the kitchen and made the supper. By the way, Louey, what was playing on the radio? Was it a jazz band?"

"That's right, Jack, she's a jazz band."

"Well—we've got that all straight. Now at seven o'clock, Joe, you closed up the store and came upstairs, then we all had supper. Now Mrs. Grippo, you know I like veal and peppers so you made an extra lot for me. We finished supper at about eight-thirty and you two women went in the kitchen to wash the dishes. Joe, you and Louey and I were sitting in the front room. Louey—you bought a couple of tickets to the dance, too—here—here's two tickets, stick them in your pocket and remember they cost you a buck a piece—no, no, I don't want two bucks. That's just in case anyone asks you. Now what did we talk about until twelve o'clock?"

"Oh, we talk about business," Joe answered, "she's a lousy, we talk about the radio, the music, she's a lousy. We talk about your bossa Mr. Keys, he's a good fellow."

"Nix, nix," I answered, "leave him out of it, you can say we talked about everything. But get this straight! I drank a lot of wine and at about twelve o'clock I got sleepy. Then Mrs. Grippo told me to lay down on the couch and I went to sleep. Now listen, Louey; you went home at two o'clock and it's two now; so you and your Mrs. get your hats and I'll be seeing you again. Say, by the way, take a good look at these clothes I'm wearing; it's a blue serge suit, white shirt, blue tie, and a brown hat. My shoes are black but you don't have to be too sure of that. Before you go, Louey, what are you doing for a living now?"

"Oh, Gees, I'm out of work!" answered Louey.

"That bum's always out of work," added his wife.

"Well, here's fifty bucks to keep you from going hungry for a while and as soon as this thing blows over, come down to see me at the Club and I'll tell the Boss to give you a job on one of his trucks. Of course, you can't start work yet for a couple of weeks because it wouldn't look right if you were working for Mr. Keys when the trial came up."

"Say, Jack," said Louey as he pocketed the money, "you're one fine fella. I don't know what this is all about but I know you was here since a quarter to six tonight."

Louey and his wife left and I walked across the room, took off my coat and lay down on the couch.

"Good-night, folks," I said as I kicked off my shoes, "wake me up about nine o'clock, will you? By the way, Joe, there's two hundred bucks in this for you."

"Gee, that's fine, Jack, that's gonna help me a lot cause dis business so lousy dat I gotta cut out a lot of expenses. Why only last week I gotta take out my telephone——"

"Aw right, aw right, Joe," I cut in, "I know you've been having a tough time but I don't want to listen to your troubles now. Tell me about 'em some other time."

Joe and his wife both said good-night and without any questions went into their bedroom.

THE next morning at nine o'clock Mrs. Grippo made breakfast for me and at nine-thirty I waved good-bye to Joe as I passed his store. He was talking to a customer near the door.

"He's a fine boy, that Jack Hearn. He have supper at my house last night and he drink so much wine, he have to sleep there."

IT'S ALWAYS FAIR WEATHER

Even when it's dull and dark outside, it's bright and cheerful in the home where cheerful colors have been harmoniously used in the furnishings and hangings. If you would like help in arranging the best possible color schemes for your own home, send for our circular, BRIGHTEN YOUR HOME WITH COLOR. It will be mailed to you on receipt of ten cents, plus three cents for postage. Send to Home Beautiful Editor, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

They both laughed and so did I as I continued on my way to the Club, for I could always use another witness. I had walked about two blocks when a cop by the name of Bill stopped me.

"They want to see you down at the house, Jack," he said, "I'm sorry, Kid, but I guess I'll have to take you in."

"THAT'S all right, Bill," I answered, "but let me go in the drug store and make a phone call."

Bill looked worried but the Boss had hired a private room for Bill's kid when the child was sent to the hospital with pneumonia. The Big Shot had paid all the expenses including the doctor's bill and naturally Bill was under an obligation.

"Say, Jack," said Bill, "this would get me in an awful jam if the Captain heard about it."

"Don't be a fool," I answered, "whose gonna know about it? There's nobody watching us now and you can tell the skipper you picked me up as I came out of the drug store."

"All right, Jack, but make it snappy, will you?"

"Thanks," I answered as I walked into the store and stepped into a phone booth. I called the Club and one of the mob answered the phone.

"Get hold of Frank right away," I said, "tell him I just got picked up and tell him to get a mouthpiece down to the house as quick as he can. I think I'm due for a shellacking so make it snappy, good-bye."

I left the drug store and accompanied by the cop proceeded toward the station. On the way to the house Bill paused.

"Shall we grab a cab, Jack? Fifteen blocks is a long walk."

"Like hell we will," I answered, "I'm in no hurry to get there. It would suit me fine if I broke a leg and you had to carry me." Bill laughed and we continued on our way to the house.

WE entered the police station and Bill walked up to the Sergeant at the dsk.

"Here's Jack Hearn, Sergeant. I picked him up on suspicion like you told me to."

"Hello, Jack," said the Sergeant, "we haven't seen you for quite a while, where have you been keepin' yourself?"

"Oh, here and there, Sergeant. What's the trouble this time?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Jack, the boys inside want to speak to you for a while."

He turned to the officer.

"Tell Kennedy to come out here."

Kennedy came into the room and I smiled.

"Hello, mug, what's on the program for today? Is the phoney detective trying to frame some one or are you stuck for a pinch?"

"No, just a little chat. Come on in."

I followed him into the back room, and while we are waiting for the session to begin, suppose I tell you how the average gangster faces a third degree. To begin with, I had entirely put out of my mind the actual events which had taken place on the previous night. As far as I was concerned they did not exist, for I knew nothing about them. In their place I had firmly established in my mind a chain of events which took place at the Grippo home, starting at five-forty-five in the evening. These imaginary actions I had gone over so thoroughly and minutely that for me they were now an actuality. I *could* not tell the police anything about the crime that had been committed last night. I did not know anything about it. I had thoroughly convinced myself, for the time being at least, that I spent the evening with Joe Grippo. This is the usual attitude that a man with an alibi takes with him into the "back room."

When we entered there were four other detectives about a long table which was placed in the center of the floor. Contrary to the usual belief, I was not placed under a glaring light. I was motioned to a chair at one end of the table and the five men ranged themselves about me. I didn't ask any questions, I had been through this too many times before. I merely tried to make myself comfortable and waited for the show to begin. They did not keep me waiting long before one of them suddenly spoke.

"Why did you have to—achew—that cop?"

I just smiled because this is an old gag. The sneeze in the middle of the sentence was quite purposeful. My answer was supposed to have been: "I

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didn't kill the cop," or "Who got killed?" or some such use of the word *kill*. I would immediately have been the recipient of a barrage of questions, such as "Who said anything about killing?" "So you did kill him, eh?" "How do you know a cop was killed?"

This was old stuff so I let it go with a grin. The next question was a little more direct.

"You were a fool to kill that cop last night."

I didn't answer him. I didn't know anything about a cop being killed.

"Come on, Jack, you're in a tough spot; we've always played ball with you; take a plea and we'll help you get a light one."

"This is all new to me," I answered, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Oh, you don't, eh? I suppose you don't remember killing a cop on Fourth Avenue last night?"

"I tell you I don't know anything about it."

One of the detectives leaned across the table.

"Where were you last night?"

"Why, I was up at Joe Grippo's house."

"What time?"

"Oh, about half-past five or six o'clock, I guess."

"What time did you leave?"

"I didn't leave, I slept there all night."

"Oh, you've got a nice little alibi, have you? Well, let me tell you something, Jack, we've got you where we want you this time and this is going to be your last chance to take a plea. Why don't you come clean?"

"I tell you again I don't know anything about it; and besides whoever heard of a guy taking a plea in the police station?"

Kennedy rose and stepped behind me.

"Still the wise guy, eh?" he said.

SUDDENLY I got a stunning blow on the back of the head. This also was an old gag. The idea being, not to knock the prisoner unconscious, but to befuddle his brain to such an extent that when a sharp clear question was shot at him he would instinctively give a truthful answer. I had been expecting the blow and when the question came I gritted my teeth as my head pitched forward on the table and fought against the answer that sprung uncalled for to my mind. The question was, "Were you driving or were you in the back?"

The words, "I was driving—I was driving—I was driving"—seemed as though they were trying to tear themselves from my lips but I continued to clench my teeth and stall for time. One of the detectives, seeing me sprawled out on the table with my head between out-stretched hands frowned at the man behind the chair.

"Ah, hell, Mike! You hit him too hard."

"Don't fool yourself, he's not out, give him a try," answered Kennedy.

The detective who was seated across the table from me took a deep drag at the cigarette which he was smoking and then placed the glowing end on the finger-nail of my right index finger. This also was a trick that had been worked on me before. The idea being, that if I were unconscious I would not feel the burn. On the other hand if I was shamming, I would instinctively twitch when the heat reached the tender portion of my finger under the nail. The beauty of this trick is that it leaves no scar to be shown by a lawyer in court, as proof that a confession was forced from the defendant. Another fact in its favor is that the pain lasts for quite a long while. Oh, yes, I knew what was coming and once again I clenched my teeth and tried to take it. As my hand didn't twitch, Kennedy spoke up.

"Hell, I guess he's softer than I thought he was. Give him a shot of the salts."

Another of the detectives placed a bottle of smelling salts under my nose. This was not through kindness but merely from a desire to bring me to as quickly as possible so that they could go on with their questioning. In a few moments I lifted my head from the table and once again came a storm of questions. After about twenty minutes of this, the Sergeant stepped into the room.

"Get him out of here, quick! Take him down to the next precinct. Keys' lawyer is outside and he's got bail and a writ."

I was hustled out of a side door, placed in a waiting police car and taken to another station house. Here the ordeal started anew. Once again the lawyer caught up with me only to have the same trick land me safely in another station house.

At this third stop, the routine was varied a little. I was suddenly confronted with one of the kids that had been with me the previous night. I had to take a good look at him before I actually recognized him. The cops had been working on him for twelve hours and he was a mess. He looked at me sullenly, and stubbornly refused to admit that he even knew me. This was a lie, he knew it, I knew it, and the cops knew it. But nothing they did to him could make him change his story. As far as I was concerned I admitted that I had seen him around the neighborhood but that was as far as I would go. Finally they took the kid out of the room and returned with the other youngster, Tony. This was the punk that had started all the trouble and I wasn't at all sorry to see that he had received very close attention from the cops. Tony would say absolutely nothing, merely snarled. For my part, I told the same story as I had before and hoped for the best.

Finally the mouthpiece caught up with us and I was sprung for the time being at least. I immediately returned to the Club.

ONE of the men who was seated at a table in the far corner of the room, called to me.

"Hey, Jack, that girl of yours, May Read, just called up and asked for you. She's been trying to get you all day; she says it's very important."

This was a surprise to me. For weeks May would not talk to me and now she had been calling me on the phone. I had called her only the night before and she had refused to say one word to me. I lost no time in getting her on the wire. Her first question was a greater surprise.

"Where were you last night, Jack?" she asked.

"What's all the excitement about?" I said, stalling for time.

"Just answer my question, Jack; answer me truthfully. I must know, it's awfully important."

"Why, what's so important about it?"

"Oh, Jack, stop evading and give me an answer. Mike Kennedy says that you——"

That was as far as she got. The mere mention of the man I hated above all other men, threw me into a frenzy.

"Mike Kennedy says, eh?" I shouted, "What the hell do I care what Mike Kennedy says. He can tell you any damn thing he wants and you can believe him if you want to. As far as I am concerned you can both go plumb to hell."

I slammed the receiver on the hook and walked across the room to the office of the Big Shot. Before I opened the door I turned to the men in the corner.

"If she calls up again, tell her I went out. Tell her I went to buy flowers for Kennedy. Tell her anything."

I walked into the office, slammed the door and faced the Big Shot.

He was seated in his usual position behind the desk in the corner of the room. As I entered, he sprang to his feet and snarled.

"You're a fine dope, you are. Now do you see what you got yourself into? What was the idea of driving that car last night? Have you got yourself covered? What's your alibi?"

"Oh, stop beefing, will you, my head is spinning like a top now. The lumps gave me a fine work-out before that dumb mouthpiece of yours caught up to me. They got the two kids all right and it looks as though they are going to burn."

"The hell with them," answered the Big Shot, "you're the guy that's got me screwy. Every time I've got a job laid out for you, you go and do something dumb."

"Oh, I get it—I mustn't get killed because you got another job for me. Well, let me tell you this: I'm not going to do another damn thing 'til I knock off that guy Kennedy. Whether you like it or not, I'm going to unload a set of slugs in that mug's belly."

"Quit it, Jack," he said, "you're all

(*Please turn to page* 58)

SCRAPS *and* PATCHES

Save the pieces left over from your next bout of home dress-making, or look up the scraps you may have on hand. Our set of circulars on patchwork gives diagrams and directions for making Colonial petal rugs, patch-work quilts and piece-work quilts, cushion covers, handbags, calico dog, rag doll and appliqué designs for children's dresses. If you would like a set of these circulars, send your request with ten cents to Frances Cowles, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Protection

(*Continued from page 57*)

on edge. If I didn't know you as good as I do, I'd think you were hopped to the eyes. Lay off Kennedy. If you put the heat on him now, they'll spot you for it in a second. You leave him to me and I'll tell you what I'll do. You take care of this little job that I want you to do and I'll take care of Kennedy."

"That's a bet, Frank," I answered, knowing that the Boss would keep his word. "But whatever it is, it has got to wait until tomorrow. I'm going home and take a little rest and I'll see you in the morning."

"All right, go ahead, get the hell out of here. Remember, I want to see you at noon time tomorrow. We've gotta get the rest of those cigar stores in line for some protection. I think Joe Schwartz is the only one you are gonna have any trouble with."

"Aw, I think Schwartz will fall in line all right; I called him up at about ten o'clock last night and told him I'd give him two days to think it over. He sounded kinda funny over the wire—My God, Frank, I made a mistake! ! !"

"What do you mean you made a mistake?"

"When I was talking to the cops today I spotted myself at Joe Grippo's house. I told them I got there at six o'clock and didn't leave until this morning. I figured that was a safe bet because I had been here at the Club all afternoon and evening, but I forgot about that damn telephone call."

"Did Schwartz know it was you that was talkin' to him?"

"Of course he did, he asked me if it was Jack Hearn and I said yes."

"Well, I wouldn't worry about that if I was you; you can say that you called up from Grippo's house."

"Yes, that is a good idea, Frank. I guess that will cover it."

"ALL RIGHT, Kid, don't worry about it; go on home and go to bed. But you're sure that's the only call you made, aren't you?"

"Oh, I called my girl but she hung up on me. She's okay though."

I knew no matter what May thought of me, she would surely never squeal.

I left the Club and went to my home. I hadn't been home more than a half-hour when the phone rang. I answered it and it was May.

"Jack, I've got to speak to you," she cried.

"Oh, you do, eh?" I answered, "well do it some other time." I was still wild with jealousy and anger. Had I known at the time what was in store for me, I would not have talked the way I did. For the rest of my life I was to regret not listening to the girl that loved me and in spite of her pride was trying to warn me.

"Jack, don't talk to me like that. Listen to me, for God's sake give me a chance to tell you——"

I slammed the receiver on the hook. For the second time that day I had made a mistake that was to torment me throughout every day that was to come.

In a few moments the doorbell rang. I opened the door and there stood Detective Kennedy.

"Sorry to bother you, Jack, but I guess you'll have to come down to the house again."

"Ah hell, Kennedy, why don't you save both of us a lot of trouble. You had me down there once today and you had to spring me. You haven't got anything on me."

"Well I don't think your mouthpiece is going to spring you this time, Jack."

"Why, what's the charge?"

"Oh, just murder, that's all."

"All right," I answered, as I reached for my hat, "come on, copper, let's see if you can make this one stick."

We grabbed a cab and drove to the station house. This time I was booked for murder. After the usual routine I was again ushered into the back room. Practically the same line of questions that were asked me earlier in the day were again thrown at me. I gave the same answers to them that I had in the morning. After about ten minutes of this Kennedy leaned over the table and tapped me on the shoulder.

"By the way, Jack, didn't you call up Joe Schwartz last night at about ten o'clock?"

"Sure I did, but what's that got to do with this?"

"Oh, nothing much, but you see Schwartz thinks we can give him better protection than your outfit can. We stationed a man in his store and we listened in on your call."

"Oh, you did, eh? Well, you don't think I was dumb enough to say anything over the phone that could be used against me, do you?"

"Oh, no, we don't think that, Jack. We were just wondering where you called up from." He paused for a moment, then he added, "I happen to know that you made another call, too."

"Oh, you do, eh? Well, you know too much for one cop, you ought to be a squad. But you can stop wondering. I called up from Joe Grippo's home."

"That's fine, Jack. That's all we want to know. Now if you don't mind will you use that telephone there and call up Joe Grippo. Ask him to come over here so we can check up on some of this."

"All right, copper, anything to oblige."

I reached for the telephone with one hand and with the other opened my address book in which was listed Grippo's phone number.

"Hello—gimme Utrecht 6216—what's that? What's that you say?—the phone's been discontinued."

"I guess that kinda settles that argument," said Kennedy, "it's too bad your friend Grippo didn't tell you he had his phone taken out last week."

MY present address is Sing Sing and it will be for quite some time as I am doing "twenty to life." The two wop kids were up here with me for a while, but they were electrocuted. May used to write to me but she doesn't anymore; I guess she's too busy with Kennedy. I'm still thinking about the nice little speech that the Judge made when he sentenced me. He said he was putting me away for the protection of the honest citizens. Hell, I didn't know I was competing with the State of New York in the sale of protection.

Solution to "Death of Dorothy Dawson"

A STUDY of the time given in the suspects' statements will show that only Jerry Baldessini saw Dorothy after half-past five that afternoon, and that the only one of the suspects who talked to Jerry after that time was Mary Conway. Dorothy had come to a sudden decision to stay at Helen Carraway's apartment at half-past five; therefore the only ones who could have known that she would be there that night were Baldessini, Mary Conway, and, of course, Dorothy's own maid. Any one of these, then, could have committed the murder, for they had no alibis.

However, it was stated that Dorothy was killed by "a terrific blow, probably from a blackjack." It is exceedingly doubtful if a woman would use such a weapon, or have the strength to wield it if she should select it.

The drinks on the end-table show that Dorothy entertained her murderer for a while, at least, before she was killed. But if you look closely at the ash tray you will see a cigar-butt among the cigarette-ends. This is convincing evidence that it was no woman who visited Dorothy Dawson that evening. As Baldessini was the only man who could have known she was there, it follows that he is her murderer.

Winner of the

OCTOBER PUZZLE

Isabelle Erickson

Brainerd, Minnesota

Other Correct Solutions to October Puzzle Sent By:

Mrs. Charles H. Grant, Peru, Vermont
A. Koepke, New York, N. Y.
F. W. Moxley, New York, N. Y.
F. May, Ozone Park, N. Y.
Grace Hempel, Wilmette, Illinois.
Mrs. Hazel Keefe, St. Paul, Minnesota.
A. Scovotto, New York, N. Y.
H. Racik, San Francisco, Calif.

The winner of the November crime puzzle will be announced in the January issue of this magazine which will be on sale December 1, 1933.

THERE'S NO KNOWING

● Complete in this Issue

A NEW BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

By WILLIAM GARRETT

CAST OF CHARACTERS AS YOU WILL MEET THEM:

HUGO HERRALD,
the hero, captivated by
DORIS CARTER,
who was too beautiful.

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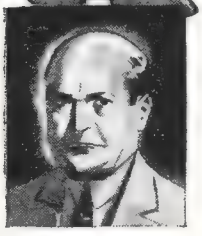

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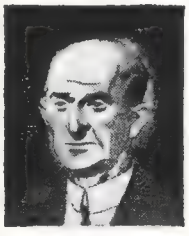

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6

1. LADY ELLISTON, who gave the fateful party.
2. MATTEO MERINO, the Italian tenor.
3. LEWIS CARTER, Doris Carter's husband.
4. MR. SALAMON, a "fence."
5. INSPECTOR QUENTIN, an excellent detective.
6. MILDRED ORDE, a "sob sister."
7. ASSISTANT WARDER BROWN, a tough guard.
8. CURTISS, swindler or gentleman?
9. HESTHER BRENT, a very lovely widow.
10. PHYLISS BRENT, her daughter, more like her sister.
11. TONY HEATH, in love with Phyliss.
12. JOHN BELLAMY, "honest" John.

12

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11

There's No Knowing

CHAPTER I

ANY KIND of party at Daisy Elliston's was a delightful affair. One was always assured of a merry evening, punctuated by laughter and little surprises, which promoted *camaraderie* and seemed never to offend even the most serious minded. One opened a book in the drawing-room and a green snake, cunningly coiled on a spring, shot instantly upward, removing the *pince-nez* from one's nose. At dinner one's roll squeaked or the cushion on which one sat played a tune or a beetle floated in one's soup or one attempted in vain to drink from a glass with slits concealed in a Greek-key pattern. As often as not there was a celebrity of some sort present, for Lady Elliston was something of a lion hunter. She liked also to have young people at her table, amusing young people if possible, and she had a real flair for combining the most incongruous elements in a happy family.

Nobody took Daisy seriously—she did not expect you to do so—and if people laughed at her sometimes it was a laughter untinged with malice for she was too good-natured to be unpopular. The great thing in life was to keep young in heart and outlook, she declared. She was out to give people a good time (including herself) and although she ate, drank, and smoked heartily, paid little attention to her face and less to her figure, she was, at forty-two, a much younger and more vital woman than many of the languid girls who came to her house. Perhaps her success was due to the removal of Sir John Elliston's restrictive influence. Certainly it was only since her husband's death that her social soul had bourgeoned like some exotic plant long denied the proper light and temperature.

She sat at her dinner table tonight beaming upon her guests. These were mostly young people and a great babble of talk and laughter, that would have shocked Sir John extremely, rose to the lofty ceiling. As usual, under the influence of good food, good champagne served incongruously in Venetian goblets, and the hostess's engaging personality the party went with a bang and clatter that drowned any discordant note that might conceivably have sounded. If dissonance existed it was on Lady Elliston's right hand in the person of Matteo Merino, the fat Italian singer who had been attracting attention in musical circles and who was the lion specially hunted out by her for the occasion. Even as she leant toward him and flirted a little with him Daisy thought him rather oily. He was too fat, too sleek, too well-groomed; his teeth were too perfect; he was, she decided, too like a well-bred tom cat. He spoke almost perfect English, his dark eyes flashed interesting, intriguing meanings, but she did not like the touch of his fingers as they rested occasionally on her plump, shapely arm. As a rule she flirted with any man who was in the least responsive and personable, but this one gave her rather an unpleasant feeling in the spine.

Her mind followed her eyes to Hugo Herrald who sat directly opposite. She wished she had placed herself next to him. That would scarcely have done, however, for although he had been abroad for some years and had not been in her house since Sir John's death, Hugo was actually her oldest friend present and naturally occupied the other end of her table, where it was his duty to act host and see that the men didn't linger too long over the brandy. It occurred to her that it would be pleasant to marry Hugo and install him permanently at the head of her table. Next moment she dismissed the idea as being entirely impracticable. Hugo would, of course, make a gallant and interesting lover, though, curiously enough, she had never considered him particularly in that relation, but he was far too unstable to be the husband of a woman verging on middle age. Besides—she looked along at Dora Carter, who sat like some exquisite animated doll between Ronnie Felton and young Payne. Glancing back at Hugo she caught his gaze fixed on Dora with an intensity and earnestness in the gray eyes, usually so lazy and amused, that hurt and puzzled her. How far had that affair gone? Hugo, if she knew him at all, would never let a woman down, but neither was he the man to let a woman make a fool of him. Of course he was as susceptible where women were concerned as he was popular with them. Still, what could he see in that painted doll, who spent half her time in the beauty-parlor, and most of the rest at her dressmakers, who had the brains of a canary and the instincts of a backyard tabby? Men were congenital idiots. She wished she had not asked Dora to her party, then realized next moment that she derived a kind of perverse pleasure in watching these two. After all Dora must have plenty of intelligence or, at least, plenty of cunning to capture a man like Hugo Herrald.

"Well, what do we do after dinner?" Victor Payne asked her. "Any surprises?" He was seated on her left, a healthy, good-looking, clean-minded boy who spent most of his time in the country. She always asked Victor and his sister Vera to a party whenever they came up to town, and they always enjoyed themselves hugely.

"What would you like?" she asked in turn.

"I don't know. We played murder last time. Great sport."

"And smashed a Ming vase in the dark," she reminded him. "Murder's too expensive."

He thought a moment. "We ought to have charades or some sort of theatricals," he suggested. "I've heard your friend Herrald's a bit of an actor."

"He used to be one of the best amateurs in the country. People used to run after him for charity shows and for country house parties at Christmas time. I believe he's acted on the real stage in America or somewhere. Hugo's done all sorts of things."

She spoke enthusiastically and Victor's eyes followed hers to the foot of the table where Herrald was causing shouts of laughter by some anecdote he was recounting.

"Interesting fellow," said Victor a little enviously. "I bet he's seen a thing or two."

"More than's good for a boy like you, Victor," she answered teasingly. "But we're not to have theatricals. Something newer and more interesting. Ronnie Felton's to explain it. He played the game at some country house. It's called 'Theft' or something of the kind. Ronnie," she called, "how do you play 'Theft'?"

FELTON, an old-young barrister with sleek hair, *pince-nez* and a dry incisive manner which lent a semblance of wit even to his most foolish remarks, disentangled himself from an interesting conversation with Mrs. Carter.

"Explain later," he said. "I'm too busy with Dora just now."

"Thank God we aren't going to play murder, anyhow," said Mildred Orde, who strove to maintain her reputation as a bright young thing by the use of expletives. "I'm hellish fed up with murder. Last week I was the corpse nine times. Damned stale."

"Do you think we're awfully silly, Mr. Merino?" Daisy asked her companion.

"I think you are all refreshing, adorable," he replied. "You English women especially. You have such vitality, such high spirits."

"I believe in everybody having a good time."

"Of course."

Daisy glanced at him coquettishly. "And would it be cheek to ask you to sing to us?" she burst out suddenly.

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"Cheek?" He was momentarily at a loss. "Ah, I know. You mean an impertinence. From you it is not a request but a command, Lady Elliston, a command I obey with pleasure."

"I believe you professional singers don't care about it sometimes," she went on, somewhat tactlessly, "but I know Vera Payne and Mildred Orde are simply dying to hear you. Vera can play any accompaniment and there's lots of good music in the drawing-room. Besides, I understand you are returning to Italy shortly, and this may be our last chance."

"I leave England tomorrow with many regrets," he said.

PRESENTLY the ladies betook themselves to the drawing-room and a more sober atmosphere settled in the big dining-room. Coffee was brought and Hugo Herrald gathered the men at one end of the table and dispensed brandy and cigars. He made an admirable host, urbane and tactful, as one who had met and handled all types of men. He was tall and stoutly built, but without any suggestion of fleshiness. His handsome, rather heavy features might have seemed a little sullen and dissipated but for the mobility of his expression and the humor of the wide, firm mouth. Although he encouraged the others to talk, they appeared for the most part to prefer to listen to him. With the exception of the Italian, they were all younger than he. Sharpe and Felton were in their early thirties, while Victor Payne and young Manford were boys who probably regarded him as middle-aged. None the less his personality would have dominated among a gathering of older men. Conversation turned upon travel and he spoke interestingly of experiences in many lands.

It would never have occurred to any of the others that he was ill at ease and wrestling with the most difficult problem that had confronted him in a life which he had hitherto regarded as a gay, inconsequent adventure, never to be taken too seriously. The cause of the problem was upstairs in the person of Mrs. Carter. The pale oval of her face with its dark, rather sleepy eyes and exquisite complexion haunted him, was before him as clearly as though she still sat at the table. In talking to the others so easily and displaying himself as the gay man of the world, the cultured fastidious bachelor who was without a care, he felt that he was acting a part. He was conscious, for the first time perhaps, that life had taken him by the throat; and life had hitherto been for him such an easy-going, gentlemanly opponent.

Sharpe was telling some yarn about a climb on the Mischabel and Hugo's thoughts wandered. Of course, he was idiotically infatuated. He quite recognized that. He had known Mrs. Carter for less than a month—didn't really know her now for that matter—but love had nothing to do with time, or knowledge, even. It was like a flood that came suddenly from nowhere, submerging familiar landmarks and casting one helplessly adrift. Or perhaps the old simile of a disease was better, a disease which attacked peasant and potentate with equal virulence and induced the same reactions. Such ludicrous reactions, he reflected. About love, as about death, there was always something ridiculous. These two were nature's great challenges to reasoning man. To an outsider he would no doubt appear as pitifully absurd as any other. To Daisy Elliston, for example. He wondered how much she surmised.

He knew that he could probably make Dora Carter his mistress if he chose. The hand holding his cigar trembled so that the blue line of its smoke wavered in the air. But that was not his way. He had always respected any woman worth respecting. Those who professed to know Hugo Herrald intimately sometimes said that if chivalry meant anything in these days, he was one of those designed for its service. "H. H." as they called him affectionately, was easy-going, fascinating, might perhaps have been a bit of a rogue and vagabond if his life hadn't fallen in such easy places, but he was absolutely on the level. Even his intimate friends, however, could not know the Hugo Herrald who sat now at Lady Elliston's table acting a part . . . .

When he entered the drawing-room Dora was standing with Daisy Elliston and Elsa Sharpe beside a tall cabinet, one drawer of which the hostess had unlocked in order to display something within. A curious diffidence seized him, as though avoidance of Dora would somehow postpone or render easier his decision, and he deliberately crossed the room to where Vera was sitting beside Mildred Orde.

The other men had gathered about Ethel Greatorix and they had all drifted over to the cabinet where Daisy was showing some of the treasures collected by her late husband. There were miniatures, intaglios, and various pieces of *cinque-cento* and Renaissance jewelry including rosaries and collars studded with gems and an exquisite little figure in pearl tricked out with emeralds and diamonds attributed to Benvenuto Cellini himself.

"Marvelous!" exclaimed Merino, holding the trinket in his palm. "Observe the lustre."

"Simply priceless," said young Manford.

Daisy laughed. "Priceless is the word, young man. I believe the collection's worth a lot of money. As a matter of fact I never paid much attention to it and don't even know its insurance value."

"Aren't you afraid to leave all these things in a cabinet?" Ethel asked. "They ought to be in a safe."

"The cabinet's almost as good. My husband had it specially constructed with patent locks. You see the double keys I use to open it. A burglar would find it pretty difficult to open unless he first of all knocked me on the head and pinched the keys."

Felton was peering into the open drawer. "Why, here's the very thing for our game," he said. He picked out a trinket box, no bigger than a small snuff-box, exquisitely jeweled and enameled. "It's just the right size and shape, easily but not too easily concealed, and it will give the thief the feeling that he's pinching something worth while. May we use it, Daisy?"

"Of course," the hostess assented readily. "Put it on the table there, Ronnie. But first of all we're going to have some music. Mr. Merino has promised to sing to us. Will you sing now, Mr. Merino?"

The Italian smiled and bowed. "I should be most charmed," he said graciously.

There was a move to the piano, a pile of music was produced and the singer made a selection of three songs. Vera Payne, who was a competent if uninspired musician, was called upon to accompany, and the guests scattered themselves about the room. Despite the rather halting accompaniment, the singer commanded instant attention. The voice, instinct with the fire and passion of the South, had a clarity of tone devoid of that quality of hardness so often associated with a tenor. It cast its spell, quickening the heart-beats of the listeners and stirring all kinds of vague emotions.

Hugo had remained on the settee and Mrs. Carter was seated beside Felton on the other side of the room. She leant forward with her eyes on the singer, her face a little flushed and her thin white hands nervously twisting a handkerchief. She was letting the music carry her away, Hugo thought. He knew no Italian and the song was in that tongue, but it was plainly a love-song, a lover singing to his mistress, unmistakable in its passionate meaning, irresistible in its emotional appeal. Her beauty caught him by the throat and held him; she became the living symbol of the passionate song that flowed around her, she captured and focussed its tenderness and fire. Her eyes left the singer and met his gaze, and his heart leapt, so that the pulses hammered in his ears, almost drowning the song. The message of her eyes was as clear to him as though she had shouted it across the room . . . .

THE singing ceased. There was much enthusiastic applause. Hugo found that his clasped hands were hot and moist and that perspiration glazed his forehead. But, with the lifting of the spell, his natural coolness reasserted itself, and, as though the strength of his passion and the warmth of her response had drawn out his reserve common sense, he began to see his problem in better perspective. Of course he could clear out of the country now and leave matters to the arbitrament of time. But that would be running away. Besides, he loved her too much to give her up in that way. No, the matter must be settled at once, it must be her choice and she must choose with her eyes open to all the consequences. "I'm a damned fool, of course," he told himself, "but I can at least try to be an honest fool." He dived into his pocket for his cigarette case.

Ronnie Felton, who had been engaged in something approaching an altercation with Miss Greatorix, now held up his hand for silence and after several pretended nervous coughs proceeded to make a speech.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I have been asked to explain the rules of the game of Theft which we are now about to play. Played according to my method the rules are simple, concise and easily observed. Unfortunately Miss Greatorix also professes to know the game. Played according to her method the rules are obscure, involved and difficult to carry out—("Liar," from Ethel). For the

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sake of peace and in order that we may play at least one round before midnight I have agreed to a compromise. Here are two sets of six playing cards, one containing a King and the other a Queen. The gentlemen will draw in turn from the former and the ladies from the latter. The lady and gentleman drawing the Queen and King will be the detectives for the ensuing round. The remaining ten ladies and gentlemen will then draw from this set of cards which contains a Knave. This time they must draw with the utmost secrecy, returning the cards face downward to the set and giving no hint of the card drawn. The person who draws the Knave is the thief for the ensuing round. Now this little jeweled box is placed on the table in the center of the room, and the two detectives post themselves at the door which leads into Lady Elliston's boudoir, and beside which is the switch that controls the lamp above the table. All other lights will be turned off. Observe that at this point none but the thief is aware who the thief is. If they think it will assist them in spotting the person who has drawn the fatal card, the detectives may spend a few moments examining the demeanor of the others as they move casually about the room engaging, if they choose, in desultory conversation or badinage. As soon as they are ready the detectives will switch off the light and retire at once into the boudoir, closing the door after them. There they will remain exactly one minute by the boudoir clock, when they will rap thrice loudly on the door, and after waiting about ten seconds will re-enter this room and switch on the light. Now during that minute while this room is in darkness the thief must purloin the box. He must imagine that he is a dangerous crook bent on taking the family jewels out of the house.

"Primarily his object is to get it past the detectives without being detected as the thief. If he succeeds in this he is safe and the box is, theoretically, his. Secondarily his object is, in any event, to evade detection. He can do this by placing the box unknown to his victim in the custody of somebody else and endeavoring to throw the blame on that somebody or, as a last resort, by concealing it in some simple place such as behind a cushion and endeavoring by lies to evade responsibility. As soon as the knocking is heard each player excepting the thief must stand still until released by the detectives. After switching on the lights the latter proceed to examine each person in turn. This examination is two-fold. There is an oral examination in which every person must answer any question asked with absolute truth—every person, that is, except the thief, who may lie as he pleases. But no information must be volunteered except in answer to questions. The examination also consists of search. In the interests of modesty the male detective will search the males behind that screen, and the female detective will search the females behind the other screen in the corner. The search must be reasonable and the party interrogated shall not be required to remove any article of clothing.

"As soon as the detectives are satisfied with their examination of any person they shall allow him or her to pass into the boudoir. If any person thus liberated has succeeded in conveying the stolen box to the other room he or she shall immediately declare the fact, thus obviating further search and questioning. The object of the detectives is of course to detect the culprit. If the box is discovered on any person or concealed in this room the detectives must make up their minds whom they will accuse. They will then make a direct charge of theft against this particular person. If he is the actual thief he must this time admit his guilt. If the party thus directly charged is not the thief the detectives have failed and lose the hand."

"But surely the men are unfairly handicapped," Manford protested. "I mean, they have pockets into which the thief could easily slip the box. Suppose I am the thief and I want to pass the box on to one of the girls?"

"If the men have pockets the ladies have handbags which contain their so-called wisps of handkerchiefs, their cigarette cases, powder-puffs and what not," Felton answered. "The bags will be placed in prominent positions about the room and can be used as desired. The simplest way to learn the game is to play it. Miss Greatorix and I will be the detectives on the first round and will demonstrate the proper police methods. I regret that the game doesn't offer amorous opportunities which 'Murder' affords, but, then, it is much more intelligent and we are, of course, an intelligent and serious company. Now here are the ten cards containing the Knave. Will you draw for thief?"

In an atmosphere of subdued but curiously rising excitement the cards were drawn, glanced at and replaced face downward. All lights except the one above the table were turned out, Felton and Miss Greatorix took up their stance by the door, while the other ten moved about the room.

"This is going to be good sport," Hugo said, and threw himself into the spirit of the game. He looked at the others, speculating as to which might be the thief. They all appeared interested and excited in their several ways, but there was nothing in the demeanor of any to indicate guilty knowledge. Suddenly Felton called out "Ready." The light was switched off and they were left in total darkness.

THE effect was quite startling. For a few moments there were titters and giggles as the players came against each other in the darkness and there was a muttered oath from one of the men who had collided with a piece of furniture. Then came what seemed a long period of silence broken only by faint breathing, wrestlings and tip-toeings. Hugo felt a stealthy hand at his pocket and thrust it sharply aside. There came three loud raps on the door, followed by some stealthy movements.

The detectives entered, switching on the lights. There were exclamations of surprise from people who found themselves in unexpected parts of the big room. Three or four of the players were grouped about the table. The box had disappeared.

Having taken stock of the situation the detectives proceeded with their examination. Questions were first of all put as to the experience of each player from the moment the light went out with a view to ascertaining whether anything had been felt or heard that would provide a clue. One thing of apparent value emerged. Lady Elliston felt some one brush against her at the table and had heard the box being picked up by this person. She was positive that it was a man. A search of the men was instituted immediately and the box was discovered in Victor Payne's pocket. He evinced the utmost surprise.

"Did you put the box in your pocket?" he was asked.

"Certainly not. Some one must have put it there," he replied.

"Did you feel any one put it there?"

"Well, not exactly. But now that you mention it I remember someone standing very close to me just when the knocking started. After the knocks came I stood still, of course, and I heard this person moving away."

"Male or female?"

"Female. I could hear the rustle of her dress."

"In which direction did she move?"

"I'm not certain. Toward the fireplace, I think."

The detectives consulted together. Then Felton turned to Victor Payne.

"We have to decide whether you are telling the truth in suggesting that some one else, presumably a lady, tried to victimize you by slipping the box in your pocket," he said, "or whether you are in fact the thief and lying to us. We are agreed that the latter is the true position and therefore accuse you."

"Correct," said Victor. "I took it."

Cards were again drawn for detectives and thief and the game proceeded. Several rounds were played and as the company grew more familiar with the rules considerable ingenuity was evinced. Mildred Orde succeeded in smuggling the box past the detectives concealed in the back of her stocking above the knee, while Felton, having been passed out with most of the others, gained permission to re-enter the room on the pretext of fetching a handkerchief for one of the ladies, and carried the box out again in her vanity bag under the detectives' very noses.

Hugo found himself drawn for the role of detective with Dora Carter. She was flushed and animated and more girlish-looking than he had yet seen her, and as they stood side by side in the little boudoir she was trembling with excitement. Here was a new Dora. Normally she was rather cool and detached, rather haughty and languid, so that many people thought her cold and calculating and essentially unemotional even where her attitude toward men was concerned. Hugo thrilled to her new mood. Something of her excitement communicated itself to him; it had a palpable quality that filled the air.

"Why, you're trembling," he said, laying his hand on her smooth, white forearm.

"Am I? Well, I suppose it—it's this game." There was a catch in her breath.

"You mustn't take it too seriously."

"But it's exciting. There's adventure in it."

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"Of course." He paused, still clutching her arm. "Dora."

"Hugo." She turned to face him. "You've something in your mind. I've seen it all night."

"I must see you tonight. Alone I mean. I want to talk to you."

She drew away a little, scanning his face. "Of course. We'll fix something. You can take me home from here. We'll leave early." She came nearer, pressing herself against him. "Hugo, do you really love me?"

"Like this," he murmured. His arms went suddenly about her and he kissed her passionately again and again. She responded with an ardor equal to his.

There came a thumping on the door. "Hi, you two," Felton's voice called out, "hurry up. You've only to wait a minute, you know, and we've been falling over each other in the dark for about ten."

"Right, just coming," Hugo called, disengaging himself. Suddenly he felt foolish and weak. This wouldn't do. He turned to the door, but Dora restrained him and telling him to wait a moment turned to the mirror above the mantelpiece in order to smooth her hair. He stood watching her a little grimly.

"You're so rough, Hugo," she murmured smiling at him over her shoulder. "And I've left my bag in the other room. I'll have to retire for repairs. There. Lead on, Sherlock."

This time the detectives' task proved a simple one, the box having changed hands several times in the darkness and having been returned eventually to the pocket of Sharpe, who, as it happened, was the original culprit. A servant appeared with drinks on a tray and a halt was made for refreshment. Dora complained that she couldn't find her bag and it was only after a considerable search that it was discovered by Dora herself beneath a big copper pot which stood on three short legs and was used for holding firewood.

"Why, how on earth did it get there?" Daisy asked.

"I must have dropped it," said Dora. "Then I expect someone kicked it across the parquet and it slid underneath the pot. It's a good thing I saw the handle sticking out. We might have searched for ages." She passed Hugo on the way to the door. "I'm slipping upstairs to make myself more presentable," she whispered. "Let's go soon."

There was a general demand for continuation of the game, but after two more rounds Dora announced that she must go. At the same time Hugo came forward to bid his hostess good-night.

"But you're not going yet, Hugo?" said Daisy reproachfully. "I've hardly seen you."

"I—I promised to see Mrs. Carter home," he said a little lamely.

"Oh—Well, of course—"

"I'll look round and see you some day soon, if I may. Before I go away."

"Away! You're not going away?"

"Yes. I'm going abroad for a bit." He spoke hurriedly. He was conscious of Dora Carter standing beside him and heard the sharp intake of her breath.

"But you're only just home," Daisy protested.

"I'm afraid it can't be helped."' He tried to speak lightly. "As a matter of fact it's partly on business."

Lady Elliston wasn't looking at him. She was staring at Dora Carter as she spoke—"Business! More likely adventure in your case, Hugo. How long are you to be away?"

"I don't know. Some considerable time."

"Well, don't forget to come and see me. Dora, you're looking very tired, dear. Take her home, Hugo, and pack her off to bed."

CHAPTER II

MRS. CARTER lived on the third floor of one of the new blocks of flats that had arisen almost within the shadow of Westminster. It suited her husband, Lewis Carter, to be close to the House of which he had been a member in every parliament but two for about a quarter of a century. At the moment he was in opposition, but the swing of the pendulum was expected to throw his party into power at the next election and himself into office with cabinet rank. Although his style was a little ponderous and over didactic and he was totally lacking in a sense of humor, he had an effective enough platform manner, bolstered up by an intimate knowledge of all the stock phrases and data and he conveyed an impression of sincerity that went down with all electors who looked upon politics as a serious business.

Dora, who was twenty years his junior, was his second wife. He had purchased her as one might purchase a beautiful and decorative picture to adorn one's home. He was immensely proud of her and, through her, of himself. There was nothing he liked better than to show her off at first nights and political receptions where the attention paid her flattered his choice; and the armour of his vanity was too thick to be pierced by the tiny shafts of scandal and ridicule which the gossip-mongers sometimes let fly even in his presence. He did not trust Dora, for he trusted no one, but his self-complacence was greater than his suspicion. In his way he loved her, in his way he was good to her, but his way was a niggardly way that watched carefully over her expenditures and unexpectedly called her to account in all sorts of ways.

DORA had not repented of her bargain. It may be that during the first year or two the glamour surrounding the successful politician had persisted and the interest and excitements of her new life had kept boredom at bay. She argued to herself that she had a genuine affection for Lewis, who was always neat and polished and who carried himself with an air of distinction that many women found attractive. At least she had never allowed her heart to rule her head and she had entered into the marriage with her eyes open. Despite Lady Elliston's view to the contrary she had plenty of brains. She was cleverer than Lewis and a greater opportunist. But in the last year or two they had drifted apart. Politics, in which he was increasingly absorbed and which sent him to address meetings all over the country, bored her and her craving for excitement and adventure sent her, not with the headstrong rush of youth, but coolly and deliberately in search of new company and new sensations. She found both.

Clothes, men, gambling—these became increasingly her interests—the first to adorn her body that the second might be more surely attracted, the third to provide excitement whenever the second failed. Her lovers were chosen with as much care as her dresses and were as easily and quietly discarded if she tired of them. But, although at the age of thirty she was a calculatingly vicious woman, her actions were controlled and dominated by fear of her husband, a fear that was none the less real because it was vague, a fear that hung like some huge, ill-defined shadow across the background of her life.

Sitting by her side in the taxi Hugo was aware of none of these things. To him she was simply a beautiful woman of whom he knew next to nothing, but with whom he was madly in love. Her hand resting in his was trembling. For some minutes neither of them spoke.

Then—"That awful woman," said Dora fiercely.

"What woman?" he asked.

"Daisy Elliston. Of course she suspects us."

"Daisy! She's a decent soul; she wouldn't harm a fly." He felt suddenly a little nettled.

"I knew you'd say that. She pretends to be your friend. I won't cross her door again."

"But why on earth? She's given us a very jolly evening."

"At the end of which she says I'm looking very tired. Didn't you hear her tone? She hates me and I loathe her. Hugo, did you think I was looking very tired?"

"Of course not. I thought you looked lovely."

"That's something anyhow." She was silent for a minute. "Hugo, was it true what you said?" she asked suddenly.

"What I said?"

"About going abroad?"

"Yes. At least—that's one of the things I've got to talk to you about."

She made no further remark, but sat quite still, staring in front of her. It was impossible to conjecture her thoughts. He had half expected an outburst, but if she were prepared to hear and consider what he had to say quietly and unemotionally his task would be easier.

"You understand that I can't discuss what I want to discuss if *he* is there," Hugo said presently. "We might go somewhere for supper."

He had a feeling that his proposals would be more easily put across a table, even in a crowded room with a band playing.

"Lewis? He's in the country up at Chipping Eden addressing a meeting."

He thought a moment. "Still, perhaps we ought to go somewhere," he suggested.

She turned and stared at him. "Good heavens! Since when did you become conventional?" she exclaimed. "What's wrong with you tonight, Hugo? Of course you'll come up to the flat and have a drink and we can talk quietly."

There's No Knowing

"As you please, Dora," he acquiesced with a slight shrug. "I daresay I'm old-fashioned."

Her face was close to his. "I won't bite, you know," she murmured.

"That's just the trouble," he said, and kissed her.

There was no porter on duty and they operated the little elevator themselves. In the constricted space of the cage he was acutely conscious of her physical presence, of her perfume, faint yet somehow penetrating, of the surge of emotion that broke over him like a wave. Never had he experienced such a desire for absolute lucidity and such inability to attain it. In silence he followed her to the door of her flat where she produced a key from her bag. Had he been more calm himself he could not have failed to notice the trembling of her hand and the fumbling of the key in the lock. She thrust him into her little sitting-room, switched on the electric fire and left him.

"I'LL be back in a minute," she said at the door. "Make yourself comfortable. You'll find something to drink on the side table."

Helping himself mechanically to a whisky and soda and a cigarette, he set his glass on the mantel-shelf and stood smoking nervously in front of the fire. This was the first time he had actually been inside the room. On all his previous visits he had been either in Lewis Carter's room, called the "library" because of its collection of blue-books, works of political reference and statistical volumes on trade and finance, or in the dining-room, and Lewis had always been present with his dapper figure and dry, incisive voice to strike the correct notes of formality and respectability. This room was very different. There were easy chairs and a *chaise-longue* plastered with bright variegated cushions, masses of bronze and pink chrysanthemums on the table and desk, trinkets scattered about, and a tawny cat asleep in a be-ribboned basket; and despite the electric fire the effect was intimate and cozy and a little untidy. Waiting there for her return it struck Hugo how little he knew of the woman who inhabited the place. It had never occurred to him to analyze her. One didn't analyze a woman, for then her mystery might evaporate. At least one couldn't analyze a woman one loved. The process, it occurred to him, was rather one of synthesis, something built up out of one's emotions and imaginings into a delightful and desirable whole. But the kind of place where a person lived, the books on his shelves, the pictures on the walls, the way things were arranged, provided indications from which one might deduce something of his real character. For the first time Hugo found himself pondering these things in relation to Dora Carter. Without her physical presence it was easier. He began to take stock of the room as though he were making a new discovery.

And then she was in the room again and it became but an indefinite background. She had changed into some sort of negligée, pink with wide, short sleeves and trousers. It might have been a pajama or a smoking suit. She took a cigarette, stroked the cat, then threw herself into the *chaise-longue*.

"Well?" she said.

He gulped at his drink and sat down near her. "Aren't you going to have anything?" he queried.

She laughed. "I don't drink whisky. And I can't be bothered brewing tea."

"The servants have gone to bed, of course."

"The servants!" She raised her eyebrows. "I thought I'd told you. They've both gone away for the night."

He started. "You didn't tell me. I supposed——"

"Well, I meant to tell you. Cook's sister was getting married. The housemaid was invited, too. The wedding was somewhere northeast—miles away—with a dance to follow. I told them they needn't come back till tomorrow morning."

"If I'd known you were to be quite alone in the house I wouldn't have come up."

"If the servants had been in the house, I shouldn't have brought you here at this hour," she retorted with a touch of asperity. "I'm not a fool, Hugo. Do you think I want everybody gossiping?"

He stirred uneasily. "Gossiping? I suppose people are beginning to do that already. It's not easy to hide our—our friendship."

"I shouldn't have imagined you'd have cared."

"I care nothing—not for myself." He leaned toward her. "I've been a fool, Dora. I want to tell you what a fool I've been."

"You want to say you're tired of me?" she asked in a hard voice.

He turned upon her almost fiercely and caught her hand. "You know that isn't true. I've never felt toward any woman as I feel toward you. For God's sake don't tempt me, Dora."

She softened, conscious of a partial victory. "Do you know I haven't seen you for three whole days until tonight," she said, withdrawing her hand. "I've worried terribly. Lewis is coming back tomorrow. He's jealous, of course. It may be difficult for us."

She spoke wistfully, with a new tenderness in her eyes. He looked away from her, striving to pull himself together and collect his thoughts.

"I want to tell you of the decision I've come to and to make a proposal to you," he said, speaking low and quickly. "Listen, Dora. I came back to this country about four months ago rather at a loose end and looking for something worth while to do. In various ways politics were suggested. I had known your husband slightly. We met again. He was very kind and helpful. I studied the matter from all angles and thought I might have a shot at it. Life's always been easy for me, full of fun and adventure. I've done lots of things, acting, hunting, trading, journalism and a good deal of interesting idling. I fancy I've had enough experience of life to know what's of real value. The idea of a political career threw Lewis and me together and then I met you. I fell in love with you at once, Dora. My God, how I love you! It's just because I love you that I don't want to bring disgrace and unhappiness to you. You must see that if we go on as we've been doing it can only end in one way. You see that?"

She did not speak and her silence almost unnerved him. He glanced at her. She lay back upon the bright cushions like some beautiful white-faced doll staring at him with cold violet eyes.

"There's no use blinking facts," he continued, a little haltingly. "A time must come when restraint is thrown away. If I've got to hit Lewis I don't want to hit him below the belt. Nowadays people regard divorce with more complacence, and I daresay the so-called loss of your good name doesn't mean what it used to in the old hypocritical times. We're all more honest and reasonable, thank heaven. But I want you to face the facts and to think whether it isn't better for us to say good-bye—amicably, peacefully—and go our separate ways."

Suddenly she sprang to life, her eyes gleaming angrily. "Are you afraid? Is your love for me such a poor thing that you fear the disgrace of showing it?" she cried passionately.

"I've no fear for myself," he flashed.

"Oh, yes, you have. When you hint at the disgrace of the divorce court you are thinking about your political ambitions, your precious career, which you don't want spoiled at the outset. You're saying to yourself, 'I must cut free from this woman before she drags me down.'"

"You're wrong, Dora," he interrupted, gently. "A political career means nothing to me."

"I can't believe that, Hugo. If I asked you to take me away somewhere, away from the dull attentions of a kindly fool of a husband I've never loved, the mere prospect of your ruined career would stop you doing anything so foolish."

"I WANT you to realize all the facts," he pleaded. "You imagine I'm wealthy. I'm not. Just now I'm in difficulties. When I came back I found that the people who were supposed to look after my affairs had let me down. I've speculated—I daresay it's in the blood—and I've lost. Actually I'm a poor man. You, on the other hand, have plenty of friends, a comfortable home, and all the material things a beautiful woman should have—dresses, jewelry, a car, society, refinement. You may have ceased to love Lewis but he's good to you and believes in you even if he neglects you at times for his politics. He has money, which I have not. We're not just boy and girl, Dora. Do you want to exchange these things for a new life empty-handed with me?"

She considered the question a moment. She was watching him narrowly, but his eyes were on the fire. "I hadn't thought about it that way," she said. "Of course, I'd no idea."

"I've thought about it all ways," he told her. "I'm mad about you, Dora. I can't trust myself to be near you. I've made up my mind to go abroad at the end of the week. I've put the facts before you. Either you come with me or we say—good-bye."

He rose and stood looking down at her. Again she was silent for a space and he was unable to fathom the work-

ings of her mind. "I understand," she said, at last. "I couldn't give things up even for you, Hugo. I don't believe we'd ever be really happy. Perhaps my love isn't any more disinterested than yours." She paused, then suddenly sat up and laid a hand on his arm. "Hugo, couldn't we go on as before, seeing each other as often as it's safe?"

"We can't. It's not possible," he answered, shaking her off almost roughly. "It wouldn't be straight. We must play the game or shout our love from the housetops."

She shrugged her pretty shoulders. "Don't try to be heroic, Hugo. After all, it hardly does for you to assume that elevated tone at this late date. If we must part don't let's pretend we're swayed by any motives of conventional morality."

He stood looking down at her a moment, his hands clenched and his whole body taut. Suddenly he relaxed and held out his hand.

"I must be off," he said in a dull voice. "Good-bye, Dora."

She endeavored to say something but the words would not come and next moment she subsided amidst the cushions and burst into a fit of passionate weeping. Immediately he was kneeling beside her, soothing her with whispered appeals and broken endearments. Presently she ceased crying and sat up drying her eyes with a tiny handkerchief.

"I didn't mean to be a beast, Hugo," she said. "Say you forgive me before you go."

"Dearest, there's nothing to forgive."

"You'll remember me always?"

"Always."

She smiled a little and rose. He stood beside her.

"You must go now, Hugo. We part friends?"

"We shall always be friends."

He took her hand and pressed it to his lips, not trusting himself to look at her face, then moved to the door. With his hand upon the knob, he turned to look at her. In half a dozen swift steps she was beside him, her arms were about his neck and his face was drawn down to hers.

"Don't go yet, Hugo," she whispered. "Stay with me a little longer. It's our last time together and no one will know."

He pushed her gently but firmly from him. She stood facing him, her breath coming and going, her eyes hurt and angry. For a moment it seemed as though she would strike him. Then her anger suddenly faded and gave way to an expression of appeal.

"Sorry," she apologized. "I didn't mean to go back on our bargain, Hugo. Honestly. But there's one thing I want you to do for me, before you go abroad. It isn't much, really. Like you I've been a fool and I'm in a frightful hole. I'm terribly in debt, Hugo—dressmakers' accounts and bridge debts and things like that. Lewis gives me an allowance but it isn't nearly enough, and he looks at my bank book and insists on my accounting for all sorts of expenditures. The tradesmen are pressing and I simply daren't go to him. I didn't know where to turn; then I thought of something. I've got a couple of pieces of old jewelry that came to me through my own family. If I sold anything Lewis had given me he'd notice at once, but if I sold these I could clear my feet and start afresh."

He stared at her. Of course he'd heard of women running heavily into debt over clothes and things. But he had imagined Dora's husband gave her a free hand. Her position, analogous to his own, struck a sympathetic note.

"How much do you owe?" he asked.

"ABOUT a thousand one way and another. I don't know how to sell the things myself, Hugo, and I'd be afraid of Lewis finding out. Besides, a man can do these things to better advantage and I thought you might know the best way. What I want you to do for me is to take the things and sell them somewhere quiet and out of the way. It's the last thing I'll ask of you, Hugo. It isn't much."

"Of course, I'll do what you wish. I think I know the very man. Let's see the things."

Bidding him wait a moment she went to her bedroom and returned presently with something which she laid on the table. He bent over it interestedly.

"By Jove! They're rather fine," he exclaimed.

There was a gold and enameled pendant set with pearls, rubies and diamonds, a lovely thing, and an emerald and ruby necklace in an antique setting. Hugo knew enough about these things to realize that they might be pretty valuable as *objets d'art*, and he guessed that removed from their setting the individual emeralds might be worth still more.

"If possible I want them sold to someone who'll buy them for the stones or will at least send them abroad for sale in America or somewhere," Dora said. "What I mean is I don't want to risk them coming into the hands of a collector here where Lewis might possibly see them."

"Why not simply pledge them?" Hugo asked.

"I couldn't hope to redeem them. It would mean saving for years and I'm not good at that. No, I want them sold, Hugo. And another thing. I must have cash. I'd be afraid of Lewis tracing a check."

"Why are you so afraid of Lewis?"

"I'm not really *afraid* of him, though he can be pretty hard when he likes. It's just——" She paused as if at a loss. "Perhaps I'm too fond of my comfort and luxuries to risk his displeasure. Say you'll do it for me, Hugo. I swear I shan't trouble you again. Try to get them sold and bring me the cash before you go abroad. I'll say good-bye then—for good."

She was looking at him eagerly, with flushed cheeks and parted lips rather like a pleading child. He picked up the things and slipped them into his pocket.

"Right. I know where to take them," he said. "I'll bring what money I can. In a couple of days. . . ."

"Then *au revoir*." With a frank smile she held out her hand. She looked lovelier than he had ever seen her. For a moment his resolution almost deserted him and it was only by a great effort that he controlled himself.

"*Au revoir*," he said.

He touched her hand, then turning away walked swiftly into the hall where he seized hat and coat and hurried from the house. No one saw him go. At the entrance to the block of flats he paused instinctively for a moment looking up and down the empty street where the endless lamps gleamed dimly and faded away into the humid night. He realized that sweat stood on his forehead and that he was shaking in every limb.

CHAPTER III

TWO days later, on a morning lit by soft November sunshine that filtered through the heavy air, Hugo Herrald descended the steps leading up to the doorway of Mr. Isadore Salamon's premises in Pimlico. Mr. Salamon professed to be, and, indeed, was a dealer in antiques. In this region of faded Victorian grandeur and respectability the business had been in the time of Mr. Salamon's father a grand and respectable business. Hugo's Uncle Henry, the Bond Street furniture dealer from whom Hugo had inherited the small fortune which had maintained his adventurous existence, had had many profitable dealings with the elder Salamon, and Hugo himself during two years of rather uninterested apprenticeship had on several occasions been in the Pimlico premises. But in the smooth hands of Isadore the Pimlico business, while remaining grand, had ceased to be respectable. It was rumored in certain circles that Isadore was an international "fence." Whatever truth there might be in the allegation, he had so far kept out of reach of the law and many dealers in London knew that he commanded channels for the outlet of goods that were not open to them. Through his agency they were often able to obtain a better price than could be got from their own clientele, and he could sometimes find a market for "difficult" or apparently unsalable pieces. He acted, in fact, as a kind of international clearing house and no one scrutinized his methods too closely.

Hugo was aware of both the facts and the rumors and had come to the conclusion that Mrs. Carter's jewelry might be disposed of less obtrusively and to greater advantage with Mr. Salamon than with any other dealer. His confidence seemed justified. Isadore's eyebrows had gone up at sight of the pendant and necklace. He had whistled through his teeth, and passed his white fingers caressingly over the stones.

"They are beautiful—beautiful," said Mr. Salamon.

"They are family heirlooms," Hugo told him simply. "I need money. I want to sell them for cash."

"It is a pity to part with them."

"I need the money—at once."

Mr. Salamon thought a moment. "If you will give me a few days I will see what I can do."

"I can't wait. I'm going abroad day after tomorrow."

Again the dealer's eyebrows went up. "Come," he said and led the way into a back room. Here he had spent half an hour examining the jewels through lenses and applying a number of tests.

There's No Knowing

"I am prepared to advance you five hundred pounds now," he announced at last. "If you communicate with me in a week I may be able to sell by then. That might mean another five hundred."

"Right," Hugo said. "And look here, I don't want them exposed in any of the sale rooms. I don't want people to know I'm selling. It's apt to damage one's credit. Sell them abroad if you can."

"You may rely on my discretion, Mr. Herrald."

"And, another thing. If I don't communicate with you personally I'll send some one with a written mandate to collect the balance. Will that be all right?"

"Of course. You do not wish to have your holiday disturbed. I quite understand."

You understand a damned sight too much, Hugo had told himself. The whole business irked him and as he made his way toward Mr. Salamon's bank it began to look like a piece of quixotic folly. He loved Dora Carter. She was his to take, and now because he had refused to take her he had let himself in for a series of subterranean transactions as a kind of compensation to her for his refusal. The idea was a little grotesque. Was he putting himself to all this trouble because he loved her or because he had spurned her? Was he sorry for her? He had never had occasion to analyze his motives before and he found it very difficult to do so now.

The bank cashed Mr. Salamon's check with a pleasant smile on its face. It appeared that people were in the habit of cashing his checks. Hugo emerged with his pockets stuffed with notes. He reflected bitterly that he could have made good use of the money himself. It was quite true, as he had told Dora, that the people managing his affairs had let him down. Something very near ruin stared him in the face.

"Better hand over the money before I misappropriate it," he told himself, and whistling a tune to keep up his spirits, he made for Dora's flat.

She looked a little tired, strained, as though she had been sitting up half the night waiting for something. It was curious, now that their parting was inevitable, how little her beauty stirred him this morning.

"There's five hundred," he said, laying the notes on a table. "It's the best I could do meantime. You'll get more later."

"Thank you—thanks a thousand times, Hugo," she said, without looking at him. She picked the notes up, hesitated as though she meant to add something, then carried them over to her bureau where she locked them in a drawer.

"Don't you want to count them?" he asked, a little mockingly. "I might have pocketed a fiver. I could do with it, you know."

She came back and sat down near him. "I'll always remember what you've done for me, Hugo. Was there any —difficulty?"

"None. I sold to a rascal who in matters of discretion is the soul of honor. He indicates that another five hundred will be forthcoming. He'll sell abroad. Here's his address and here's a mandate that I've made out so that you can go to him yourself and collect the balance. In about a week's time."

"But you——"

"I shan't be here, Dora. As arranged, I'm clearing out in a couple of days. I'm giving up my rooms and sacking my man. London won't see me again for a time."

"Where are you going?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know. Anyhow, would it be fair to tell?"

WITHOUT replying, she took the mandate and Salamon's address and thrust them into the drawer beside the notes. Her actions were spasmodic and nervous. It was as though she were keeping something back. She returned to the fireplace where she lit a cigarette.

"Lewis is back," she said suddenly. "He came home last night."

"Well?"

"I'm frightened."

"Does he suspect something?"

"About us, you mean? No. He thinks the world of you. It's about me. One of the people who have been pressing me for money has been writing to him. We've had words. I've managed to put him off meantime, but I fear an inquisition."

"Well, the five hundred should help to clear your feet."

"It will to some extent, of course. I can use it at once —today. But there's the rest. Hugo, must you go abroad at once? Can't you wait for a week or so?"

"I'm afraid my plans are fixed," he said coldly. All at once he had a feeling of distaste, of physical revulsion almost, against being mixed up any further in Dora Carter's affairs. He had done what he had undertaken to do. "If the worst comes to the worst I should make a clean breast of it to Lewis," he advised. "Tell him the extent to which you are involved, tell him you've sold your jewels and that you'll make amends in future. He's too fond of you not to forgive you."

She came nearer to him. "Do you forgive me?" she asked.

"Forgive you?" He was genuinely surprised. "Surely it's the other way round?"

She shook her head. "You've helped me out of this, Hugo. You've given me strength. Of course I mean to make amends. I owe it to you as much as to Lewis. It's just that—well, if only you were near me, if I could see you sometimes——"

He rose to his feet. "It's got to be good-bye," he said almost harshly. "You must see that."

"Very well," she murmured. She faced him with downcast eyes, drooping, resigned, submissive. Once again his pulses stirred. She was lovely and appealing, like a flower that waits for sun or dew.

He took her hand. It was cold as ice.

"Good-bye, Dora."

"Good-bye," she whispered, without looking at him.

CHAPTER IV

THE telephone bell rang with a sharp insistent summons. Hugo Herrald lifted the receiver.

"Hullo!"

"Hullo! Is that you, Hugo?"

"Yes. That you Daisy?"

"Thank God you haven't gone abroad yet. An awful thing's happened, Hugo. I *must* see you. This morning, if possible. At once. Can you come around?"

"Of course. I was coming anyhow to say good-bye. But what——?"

"I can't tell you over the telephone. Come as soon as you can."

Hugo replaced the receiver and glanced round the room, his eyes lingering on familiar objects. It was a tastefully furnished room, simple and yet luxurious, the room of a man who, having money, knew how to spend it, who was discriminating without being fastidious. This morning it was somewhat bare-looking. The long, low bookcase was cleared of its books which were packed in crates together with the etchings that had adorned the walls. Tomorrow they were coming to remove the furniture to storage. The chambers were advertised to let; his man, Day, was being paid off; his passport was ready and for an indefinite time England would see nothing of him. He felt an unusual pang of self-pity. On previous occasions he had left home in the knowledge that home, with its books and pictures and furniture, awaited his return; in the knowledge, too, that he was a gentleman of independent means and that whatever fantastic employments his adventurous taste led him into could always be thrown over at pleasure. This time the position was quite different. He hardly yet knew the extent of his losses, but further advice from his brokers suggested that there would be precious little left. Possibly his furniture and books might have to go in order to save him from bankruptcy. Well, his lawyers would see to all that. Meantime he would have to work to live. He had no doubt as to his capacity to come to the surface again. In the circumstances it was just as well that the affair with Dora Carter was sending him out of the country.

So preoccupied was he with these and similar reflections that he had reached Wykeham Square before it occurred to him to wonder what it was that so obviously agitated Daisy Elliston and why she should be demanding his presence. He was shown straight up to the drawing-room where he found her with a stout, stocky, rather grim-looking man whom he instantly recognized as Inspector Quentin, one of Scotland Yard's most experienced detectives and a director of its unexcelled team-work. Some years ago he had made Quentin's acquaintance and since then had spent several interesting evenings in his company. Now the Inspector's presence filled him with a sudden dismay and foreboding.

"Good-morning Daisy. Hope I haven't kept you waiting," he said easily. "Hullo Quentin. What are you doing here?"

"Good-morning. Glad to see you, sir." The Inspector

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greeted him heartily. "I'm afraid this is rather a bad business."

"What's a bad business?"

"It's my jewels," Daisy exploded. "They must have been stolen that night we played here. Oh, I'm too dithery to explain. It's dreadful. You tell him, Inspector."

"It's this way, sir," the Inspector said. "Two valuable articles from Sir John Elliston's jewelry collection have been stolen from that cabinet—an enameled pendant set with precious stones and an antique necklace of emeralds and rubies. Very fine pieces, I understand."

"What!" Hugo cried. There was no need to simulate the dire consternation that he felt. So Dora was a thief! Worse still, she had laid a trap for him. He lit a cigarette in order to pull himself together.

"THE cabinet is always kept locked," the Inspector continued. "On the night of the seventh, Lady Elliston had a party. I needn't go into details, Mr. Herrald, since you were present. Her ladyship fetched her keys and opened the cabinet in order to show the treasures to some of her guests. She recollects exhibiting the two pieces I have referred to; afterward you all played a game in which the lights were extinguished from time to time. During the whole period the cabinet remained unlocked. You realize the significance of what I'm about to say, sir?"

"Quite," said Hugo.

"After all the guests had gone Lady Elliston locked the cabinet without going over the contents. The lock is a patent double-spring. She put the keys away. Early this morning she opened the cabinet again with a view to selecting certain articles which she intended to send to a jeweler's to be cleaned. She then discovered that the necklace and pendant were missing from their places."

"You suggest that one of the guests purloined them in the darkness?"

"Exactly, sir."

Hugo felt he must fight for time. Appalling prospects were opening before him. "But how do you know they weren't taken in the interval between that night and this morning?" he asked.

"I had the keys. They were hidden. No one could have got at them," Daisy put in. "Not even the servants and I've had them for years."

"Still some one might have found out where you kept the keys," Hugo suggested.

"Oh, what's the use of trying to shut one's eyes to the obvious?" Daisy cried. "Inspector Quentin says it must have been a guest. Think of that, Hugo. A guest under my own roof. And I know who it was."

"What!" Hugo was startled out of his assumed composure.

"It was that foreigner, Signor Merino," Daisy averred vindictively. "You can't trust foreigners, especially Italians. Look at those racketeers in America."

"Come, come. You've no right to suspect him because he's a foreigner."

But Daisy refused to be convinced. "I didn't like his manner. Too olive-oily. I ought never to have asked him to the house. And now he's left the country with my jewels in his pocket."

"He's the only one who's left the country. I'm glad to say we can easily lay hands on the rest at a moment's notice," Quentin said grimly.

Hugo walked to the window and looked for a moment with unseeing eyes at the Square. "But look here," he said, returning to the Inspector and partly thinking aloud, "do you realize that we were playing a game in which everyone was liable to search?"

Quentin nodded. "Lady Elliston has explained," he said. "Very curious that this should happen during such an appropriate pastime."

"Then how on earth could any one risk putting the things in his pocket?"

The Inspector pondered a moment. "Desperate people often take desperate risks," he said gravely. "Find out who was in desperate circumstances and you have your man—or woman."

"Why have you sent for me?" Hugo asked. "Isn't it rather unfair on the others, letting me in like this?"

"We wanted your help," Daisy answered. "The Inspector knew you and agreed to my sending for you."

"You were, I understand, Lady Elliston's oldest friend present," the Inspector supplemented.

"And, of course, no one could possibly suspect you," Daisy added. "I'm thinking of the others—girls like Vera and Mildred and that nice boy Victor. It's dreadful that they should be under suspicion. If I didn't believe it was that Italian, I don't know what I should do. Oh, I wish poor John hadn't been so mad about collecting things. I'll never have another party again. Never."

Lady Elliston sat down and began to weep into four square inches of handkerchief.

The Inspector led Hugo aside. "You see it's an awkward business, Mr. Herrald," he pointed out. "This Italian may have cleared the country with the jewels in his possession. On the other hand, some other guest may be the guilty party. My men are prosecuting inquiries in all the likely quarters. The insurers have been informed and the underwriters will put out the usual notice with a full description and offering a reward." He took a sheet of paper from his pocket. "I've a list of the names and addresses of the guests. I'm afraid it may be necessary to question them all and to ask them to give some account of their movements. The reason I wanted to see you in advance was because I thought you might be able to assist me. Of course, you're not under any obligation to say anything at the moment likely to incriminate any of your fellow-guests, but—well, we've known each other for a good while, sir, and if you can give me any information that will make things easier for some of them it would save a deal of awkward questioning."

"I understand," said Hugo, "but I'm afraid I know nothing that would point to one rather than another. Come to think of it, Lady Elliston's selection of the foreigner seems reasonable enough."

"You don't know, for instance, of any financial embarrassment in any quarter?"

Hugo felt that the Inspector was eyeing him keenly. "How should I, Inspector?" he asked. "You must remember that I knew very little of the other guests. Some of them I hadn't met before."

"I see." Quentin's tone was studiously non-committal. Hugo suddenly had a horrible suspicion that Daisy had let out something to the Inspector about his friendship with Dora.

"I see," Quentin repeated. "Then can you recall any incident during the evening, any peculiar action on the part of any guest? Search your mind, sir. Any little thing might throw some light on the situation. For example, as you yourself pointed out, the culprit must have managed to evade search. It would be pretty risky for a man to attempt to get through with those things in his pocket. But what about a lady? A woman might have managed to get her handbag out of the room."

Hugo felt his palms grow moist. The man was uncanny. In a flash there came to him the picture of Dora Carter searching for her bag and finding it under the copper pot by the fire. Had Daisy remembered the incident? If not, some other guest might. He felt as though his skull were a glass globe and that the Inspector's keen eyes were watching the frantic plungings of his mind. The shock of discovering that Dora was a thief, of realizing her treachery, was succeeded by the fear that she might be found out. With an effort he regained control of himself.

"That's hardly possible," he answered the Inspector's suggestion. "You see, by the rules of the game a lady's handbag was as liable to search as a man's pocket."

"You cannot recall any suspicious incident?"

"None at all. Everybody was laughing, of course, some were playing the fool at times, some were a bit excited. It was quite an exciting game, you know."

"MUST have been for the person who stole the jewels. Lady Elliston's recollection is that while she showed her treasures to the rest, you and Mr. Sharpe were sitting at the other side of the room with Miss Payne and Miss Orde. Naturally one's suspicion falls first on those who saw the jewels and could observe their position. Let me see." The Inspector consulted his list. "There was Signor Merino, Mr. Manford, Mr. Felton, Mr. Payne and the ladies, Mrs. Sharpe, Miss Greatorix and Mrs. Carter. I understand you left with Mrs. Carter, sir?"

Hugo took a breath. "That is so. I saw her home."

"I must ask you this, Mr. Herrald. Anything peculiar in her manner or appearance?"

"Nothing. She seemed in excellent spirits."

"Quite. You know the lady well?"

"Fairly well."

"You saw her to her flat?"

"Yes."

"Then you returned to your chambers?"

"Exactly."

"I'm sorry to appear to ask impertinent questions. But

it's necessary to trace the movements of each of the guests. I mean to deal with the men first. If that leads to something definite it may avoid troubling the ladies. Perhaps it was the Italian after all. Lady Elliston noticed he was specially interested in her treasures. I'll get on his track today. Meantime I know I can rely on you not to say anything to anybody at the moment, sir. This is a very ticklish job."

Hugo promised and turned to take leave of Lady Elliston who had now recovered her composure.

"It was good of you to come, Hugo," she said. "I just felt I had to see you about this before the Inspector began bothering the people who were here that night. I don't mind so much about the jewels. It's the idea that some one you're friendly with, that you've entertained in the house, could be so mean as to take them."

Hugo nodded. "I quite understand your feelings. I should be pretty wild about it myself."

"You see, the insurance people absolutely insist on investigations being made," Daisy went on. "And I know my husband would have been out for the thief's blood whoever he might be."

"Of course." Hugo nodded again and smiled, acting the solicitous friend; and all the time his mind was trying to piece things together. Daisy, obsessed with the idea of the Italian, assumed the thief was a man. Obviously she didn't suspect Dora Carter. So far so good. But what was his, Hugo's position? An accessory after the fact?

"When are you going abroad?" Daisy was asking.

"I leave tomorrow evening."

"So soon! That's a pity, Hugo. I wish you could have waited till I had got this horrid business over."

"I'm sorry, but it's impossible. Inspector Quentin will look after you. You couldn't be in better hands. Could she, Inspector?"

"Well, I won't say that exactly, sir," Quentin said, obviously meaning that he would exactly say that. "But you can take it the Yard will leave no stone unturned."

"When are you coming back?" Lady Elliston asked Hugo.

"I'm not certain. In a week or two perhaps. Good-bye, Daisy, and good luck."

Somehow he was out of the house without Quentin hanging on to him. He walked rapidly, taking no note of his direction. Ought he to warn Dora of the possible danger she was in? Ought he to attempt to recover the jewels from Mr. Salamon? But Mr. Salamon would demand his five hundred pounds and by this time Dora had probably used the whole of it in settling her bills. Besides, the jewels could not be restored without confession of the theft.

The prospect of facing Dora again was too unnerving. The best thing would be to telephone her. He found himself beside a tube station and entered one of the telephone boxes. A maid answered his call.

"Mrs. Carter in?"

"I'm sorry; she's out, sir."

"When will she return?"

"I couldn't say. She said she might be late. Can I give her any message?"

Hugo hesitated. "No. It doesn't matter," he said.

"What name shall I say?"

"Doesn't matter either."

He replaced the receiver, with a curious feeling of relief. "Thank God she was out," he muttered. "We'll leave it at that."

CHAPTER V

THE guard stood on the platform stroking his mustache impatiently and getting ready to blow his whistle and wave his flag. Railway officials were moving along the train shutting doors and urging travelers to take their seats. Hugo, wrapped in a heavy overcoat and with his cap pulled forward over his face, was sitting back in his corner feigning interest in the evening paper that lay on his knees. He had chosen the night service by Dieppe where he would be less likely to meet a fellow-passenger of his acquaintance. In a few hours he would be out of England and reasonably cut off from trouble, temptations and awkward questions. He had no illusions about himself. He was running away from Dora Carter and all that she entailed. He had no idea where he was making for or what he was going to do, and the future was as delightfully uncertain as his hitherto adventurous spirit could have desired. But his adventurous spirit wasn't reacting very satisfactorily to the prospect and life wasn't the rather jolly game for petty stakes that it had formerly seemed to be. Perhaps he was getting middle-aged. A few years ago the loss of the bulk of his fortune would not have dismayed him unduly; he would have set out quite confidently to build it up again. But now he felt rather tired and acutely conscious that he had allowed Dora Carter to make a fool of him, and that the life of ease and rather cultured amusement which he had vaguely pictured for himself on his return to England had been indefinitely postponed.

Women were the devil. Dora and Daisy were both devils —charming devils, but devils. Between them they had forced a cowardly compromise upon him. As an honest man he ought to have told Daisy the whole truth, collected the jewels from Mr. Salamon and demanded the money back from Dora. But Dora would already have spent the money and he would probably have been arrested as an accessory to her crime. Besides, he loved Dora. As a full-blooded criminal, on the other hand, he ought to have taken Dora with him, relieved her of her five hundred pounds and then deserted her in Paris as heartlessly as possible. She deserved it. But then, he loved Dora. Or did he? Now that he could realize the heartless way in which she had made use of him he was beginning to wonder if he did not hate her. Well, he could only hope that the police would pursue the false scent of the Italian singer, that Dora would lie with convincing efficiency, and that Mr. Salamon's reputation for discretion was well founded. Inspector Quentin had not approached him again, so there was reason to hope that nothing had been discovered. By the time he returned to England Daisy would have got over her loss and Dora would be safe.

What, Hugo asked himself, would another man have done in his place? The situation was not without its humor. It might be worth while putting the case in general terms to the old man in the opposite corner who looked like, and in fact was, a wealthy septuagenarian valetudinarian on his way to winter in Italy. Probably he was sufficiently old and sickly to take an unprejudiced view which could never be expected from the young and strong. Hugo was about to accost this individual when a man opened the carriage door, which a porter had just closed.

"Mr. Herrald?" said the man, staring uncompromisingly at Hugo. He was a thick-set man in a very hard-looking bowler hat, whose appearance Hugo instantly disliked.

"Yes," Hugo acknowledged.

"I want a word with you, sir. The train is about to start. Will you step on to the platform for a moment?"

Hugo merely nodded and got out. He had an idea that whatever this man had to say would be better said outside. Another man of similar appearance came forward.

"I have a warrant for your arrest," said the first man. "Stealing of jewelry from a house in Wykeham Square. If you'll step quietly along to the station there need be no fuss."

"My tooth-brush and so forth are in a couple of suitcases in that compartment," Hugo suggested.

"Your luggage is being attended to."

"You think of everything," Hugo murmured, and allowed himself to be ushered into a waiting taxi.

Presently he was in a police station where the charge was read over to him. He was given the customary caution and asked if he wished to make a statement.

"There's really nothing to state," he said.

Before he was removed to a cell, Quentin entered the room looking somewhat apologetic.

"Of course we traced the things to Salamon's," the Inspector told him. "Believe me, I'm very sorry about this."

"Believe me, I'm very sorry, too," said Hugo.

CHAPTER VI

"DEAR Hugo:

How *could* you do such a mean thing? I can't sleep at night thinking about it. For three years I've avoided potatoes without growing any slimmer and now the worry of this is turning me into a scarecrow. When I think of you standing in this very room pretending you knew nothing about it when all the time it was you who had sold my things, I feel I can never trust any one again. I used to have such a high opinion of you, Hugo. Perhaps there is some explanation of your heartless conduct. If you have any to offer that is at all reasonable I would be prepared to forgive you and will do all in my power to stay the awful hand of the law. If not, I don't wish to see you again.

Yours heartbrokenly,

Daisy."

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Lady Elliston sniffed a little as she addressed the envelope in her big inconsequent handwriting. She was almost weeping again over the wretched business, but whether the tears she restrained were tears of sorrow or tears of rage she couldn't have told.

There was no excuse for Hugo and if he was sent to prison he deserved all he got. She was in the middle of explaining her point of view to Mildred Orde when Felton and Sharpe were shown in. The barrister was looking very grave and important and one could almost see the wig covering his sleek hair.

"Well, what's the news?" Daisy asked as she helped them to drinks.

"He's going to plead guilty," Felton said. "We had a long consultation with Purfoot this afternoon, going over all the points. Purfoot gave Herrald every opportunity to explain things, but there's really nothing to explain. The dealer, of course, identifies Herrald as the man who sold him the things and in any case Herrald admits that he stole them."

"But why did he do it?" Daisy cried. "Surely he has some explanation for his conduct?"

Felton sipped his cocktail. "None at all. It isn't needed. The police have been pretty thorough. You see, they've made an investigation into the state of Herrald's affairs, and discovered that he had come a crash on the Stock Exchange and had precious little left. He was pressed for money, which is the usual motive for stealing. He admits that was why he took the jewels, although he says the idea only came to him when playing the game and as a result of something Mildred had said."

"My God, to think that I have set his innocent young feet in the path of crime!" Mildred exclaimed.

"He's rather a humorous dog," Felton went on. "I must say, in my experience of criminal cases, I've never come across an accused person who treated the matter so lightly. No man, he says, can have the right attitude to life until he's had the experience of being deprived of his liberty. He even told us exactly how he pulled the thing off. You remember when he and Mrs. Carter were the detectives we thought they were gone the deuce of a time. Well, it seems she went off to powder her nose, as they say, and while she was away he switched off the boudoir light, slipped in here amongst us, helped himself from the cabinet, then returned to his post without Mrs. Carter suspecting anything. Bold but simple."

"Perhaps Dora Carter was in league with him," Daisy said viciously. "I shouldn't wonder if he got into difficulties through spending money on her."

"That's ridiculous, of course," Sharpe declared.

"Well she's quite capable of it," Daisy insisted.

"LET me tell you as a lawyer that your suggestion is slanderous," Felton said severely. "We've had enough trouble over this. What I've said mustn't go beyond this room. I shouldn't have told you anything had Herrald not been quite decided to plead guilty. Both Purfoot and I think he's very wise. If he'd tried to put up a defense he would only have wasted the time of the Court and got a heavier sentence. As it is, there will be no necessity for any evidence. The whole thing will go through quietly in a few minutes and we'll do our best to head the newspaper men off. After all, Herrald will have a better chance when he comes out if the world doesn't know about his case. Sharpe's got some pull with newspaper men."

Sharpe nodded. "I think I can fix it," he said.

"What will he get?" Mildred asked.

"Under the Larceny Act stealing from a dwelling house may mean anything up to fourteen years penal."

"Fourteen years!" Daisy gasped. She felt suddenly sick.

"Oh, I don't suggest he'll get anything like that," Felton hastened to add. "In point of fact he won't get penal servitude at all. Only a term of imprisonment."

Sharpe finished his drink and said earnestly, "The important thing is not to talk about this outside. We want you all to realize that the less said about it the better it will be for poor Herrald. I've already seen the Paynes and young Manford, and Elsa has undertaken to speak to Miss Greatorix. Merino has left the country. There's only Mrs. Carter."

"I'll see her," Felton said. He glanced at his watch. "I'll see her now. If I know Dora she's not a woman to talk, but it's as well to make it clear to her that she'll do the best for Herrald by hushing up a nasty business."

"What about Carter?" Sharpe asked.

"I'll see him, too. He was rather interested in Herrald, I believe."

CHAPTER VII

WHEN Felton called he was fortunate in finding both Mr. and Mrs. Carter at home. Carter, he knew, had expressed interest in Herrald's case and talked vaguely of getting something done to mitigate as far as possible the retribution that must necessarily fall upon one who had violated the sacred rights of property.

"In his own interest we want to keep the thing as quiet as possible," Felton explained. "Now that he's determined to plead guilty there shouldn't be much difficulty."

"Quite so," Carter agreed. "I'll see the Home Office. Of course it's practically impossible to bring any pressure to bear upon the judge with a view to lightening the sentence. The complete independence of our judiciary is, if I may say so, the envy of the world and something we dare not tamper with. But the question of where and how the sentence is served is of importance The new prison at Billinghurst is a model of what a prison should be, clean, light, airy, equipped with the best—ah—modern conveniences, and in charge of a man of humanitarian views. It is entirely designed to combine reasonable punishment with the reformation of those criminals who are not fundamentally antisocial in their tendencies. I might try to get him in there."

"You must do your best to get him in there, Lewis," Dora pleaded. "After all, he was one of us."

"That is hardly the point," Carter said. "The fact that he moved in our circle does not affect my judgment. I'm under no obligation to him. Indeed, I feel he has treated us all rather badly. I gave him every opportunity of settling down in England and pursuing an honorable career and he spurned my offer. No. What I feel is that he is not an ordinary criminal and that it is my duty to ensure, if I can, that his prison life is as reformative as possible."

The unction with which Carter delivered these opinions in his best platform manner almost made Felton laugh in his face. The man was a walking platitude, an embodied *cliché*. He glanced at Dora who was leaning back in her chair with an air of aloofness he fancied was studied. How much, he wondered, did she feel Herrald's disgrace?

"That's very decent of you," he said to Carter. "I'm sure Herrald would appreciate anything you can do."

"You think there's no chance of his clearing himself?" Dora asked, sitting up suddenly.

"How could he? In a way, he was caught red-handed."

"I know." Dora lit a cigarette a little unsteadily. "He's not offered any explanation? Why did he do it?"

"He won't give any explanation. But the thing's obvious. He needed money."

"They've found out something about his affairs?"

"Yes. He was faced with the possibility of bankruptcy, though I believe he could have paid twenty shillings on the pound and had a hundred or two over. Still it provides a motive."

Carter nodded. "The best of us are not immune from temptation, especially where money's concerned," he said. "Still, I shouldn't have thought Herrald was the sort of fellow to succumb easily."

"My idea is that he acted on a sudden impulse prompted by the game we were playing," Felton declared. He retailed Herrald's explanation of how the jewels had been taken. "I wish I hadn't suggested the beastly game," he went on. "Although it was really you who provided him with his opportunity, Dora. You remember how we all thought you and Herrald were the deuce of a time in the other room while we were all floundering about in the dark? Of course it was while you were away titivating that he slipped into the drawing-room"

Dora spilt the ash from her cigarette over the carpet. "Yes, I remember," she said slowly. "I remember when I came back I thought he looked rather strange. But all he said was, 'You've been a long while. They're shouting to us to hurry.' Poor Hugo! I expect he blames me for putting temptation in his way?"

"As a matter of fact he did," Felton answered. "He said to me, 'if you should see Mrs. Carter tell her that if she'd stuck by me I shouldn't be where I am today.' Of course he was only joking, as he seems to do about the whole affair."

"I always thought Herrald had a distorted sense of humor," Carter observed.

Dora Carter rose suddenly, passing a hand over her eyes. "I've got one of my wretched headaches coming on," she said. "I must go and lie down, if you'll excuse me."

Carter shook his head sympathetically. "Nervous temperament," he explained to Felton.

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CHAPTER VIII

(Extract from the "Daily Wire" of 14th December.)

AT THE Old Bailey yesterday, Hugo Herrald, described as of independent means, pleaded guilty to stealing jewelry valued at £3,000 from the house of Lady Elliston, 17 Wykeham Square, W. It was stated that the stolen property had been recovered. He was sentenced by Mr. Justice Mortimer to eighteen months' imprisonment.

CHAPTER IX

PHYSICALLY Hugo Herrald had never felt fitter in his life. His skin had tanned and superfluous flesh had given place to hardened muscles. The simple and monotonous prison fare agreed with him and he slept well on the narrow bed. On the whole he was popular with the authorities and with his fellow-prisoners. It was early discovered that he could act, and his performances in the theatrical entertainments were a notable success. There were days when he thoroughly enjoyed the digging of potatoes, the turning at the lathe in the airy workshop, the sweat of the exercise yard. The governor took an interest in him and allowed him to work at times in the garden and to post the ledgers in the stores department.

But he suffered from a new bitterness of mind. The realization that he had been made a fool of was like a gnawing pain. If he had really committed the crime for which he was imprisoned he might have treated the incarceration as a penance or, more probably, as an interesting experience. Or if he had really loved Dora Carter in a romantic sort of way he might have persuaded himself that his was a glad sacrifice. Instead, he found himself hating Dora Carter and through her the whole of womankind.

Even Daisy Elliston had deserted him. Her letter had pricked him in unexpected places. She was no better than the rest of them, and he heartily reciprocated her wish never to see him again.

But Hugo Herrald's was a resilient nature and the bitter and even cynical reflections regarding women which he now entertained might have melted into a philosophical resignation had not circumstances combined to render his life in prison almost intolerable. At the end of six months chief assistant-warder Brown appeared on the scene. Brown had been transferred from another prison and he took over the southwest wing where Hugo's cell was situated. It was soon apparent that he hated all prisoners who had been what he called "bloody gentlemen." The ordinary prisoner of humble antecedents was in Brown's view more sinned against than sinning, a victim of his economic environment and entitled to reasonable treatment. The wealthy or cultured criminal, on the other hand, was entitled to no consideration whatever, and so far as it lay in Brown's power to do so his life had to be made as uncomfortable as possible.

Hugo was much the most "gentlemanly" of the prisoners under his particular charge and thus became the focus of his peculiar prejudice.

At first Hugo hardly noticed the campaign that was being directed against him. He found Brown irritating and rather like another Brown at his public school who, he recollected, ragged and bullied certain smaller boys without hurting them physically, but so effectively that their lives were abjectly miserable. He remembered how he had itched to kick school-boy Brown till he couldn't sit down and how he had eventually tried to do it and received a hiding for his pains. Here was the school bully metamorphosed into a stout heavy-jowled warder, but with this difference, that he was concentrating upon one object, that his ways were more mature and fiendish, and that his victim had no means of protecting himself.

Hugo's irritation gradually gave way to dislike and his dislike to active hatred. For the first time in his life he realized how easy it might be to become a murderer. He had seen men shot in a moment of passion upon provocation that wasn't a tithe of what he suffered. On several occasions he was on the point of complaining to the governor but thought better of it. Any individual complaint would seem trivial and Brown would be certain to take it out of him later. Besides, he had now served the greater portion of his sentence and could reasonably expect some remission if he were not forced into breaking his good conduct record.

One afternoon in early Spring he found himself with a convict named Curtiss in the library, where they were making a fresh catalogue of the books. The library work was an easy job usually given to elderly men such as embezzling solicitors, who had sufficient education and an interest in literature, and Hugo and Curtiss were lucky. They were allowed to talk and supervision was negligible.

Curtiss was an engaging fellow about ten years younger than Hugo. He was tall and good-looking, and even in the bleached breeches, worsted stockings and blue coat which constituted the prison uniform he had a handsome appearance. One easily pictured the clothes in which he arrived at the prison and which were now reposing, unnecessarily fumigated, in a locker in the reception room awaiting their owner's release—a lounge suit of faultless cut, a shirt and collar to match, a Leander or Old Etonian tie and (if one penetrated so far) pale salmon-pink silk underclothing. One readily saw the man-about-town or the Guard's officer through the rough prison garb, much more easily, Hugo thought, than one would be likely to see the criminal beneath that smooth and impeccable surface. From occasional remarks by warders and from snatches of conversation with Curtiss himself, Hugo had gathered that his companion was undergoing sentence for a series of clever frauds. He did not know the nature of these, but if suavity were an aid to swindling he wondered how Curtiss ever came to be found out.

In a way Hugo felt drawn to the other. Curtiss was the only man in his section of the prison who seemed to be of a corresponding education and culture, and they often found themselves together. In greater degree Curtiss had taken a liking to Hugo for whose dramatic art he professed a keen admiration.

Hugo was going over a pile of novels and dictating to Curtiss appropriate entries for the card index. A semi-somnolent warder sat in a chair by the door and occasionally got up and wandered over to the table where they were working.

"'Besant, Walter, and Rice, James: The Golden Butterfly,'" said Hugo. "Damned good story."

"Never read it," said Curtiss, writing carefully upon a card. "Too old-fashioned. Thank God, I'll be out soon. My time's up next week."

"Lucky devil. I've four months to go," Hugo groaned. "'B. and R: With Harp and Crown.'"

"I'd prefer saxophone and beret. I'm sorry for you, Herrald. That swine Brown. My God, if I were here another couple of weeks I'd do him in! I swear I would. Harp and Crown? Right."

"'Collins, Wilkie.' No, wait a bit. Here's another B. 'Barclay, Florence'—"

"Another B—F. B. Is it 'The Rosary?'"

"Yes."

"Read it in my uncorrupted days. You remember she talks about nightingales in Aberdeenshire?"

"Artistic license. Rubens painted shadows running toward the sun."

"Can't see it." Curtiss went on writing busily. "Next, please."

"'Collins, Wilkie: The Moonstone.'"

"That's the stuff. Tells you in about a thousand pages how to pinch the jewels."

"I know." Hugo sighed. "I ought to have re-read 'The Moonstone' before trying my own hand."

CURTISS nodded and dipped his pen in the ink-well. "You blundered, Herrald. You ought to have thought the thing out better. Next time you must take more care."

"Next time? Well, perhaps you're right. 'Collins, Wilkie: The Woman in White.'"

"Women should never be in white. Doesn't show up the flesh."

"You know a lot about women?"

"I flatter myself, I do."

"'Colver, Alice Ross: If Dreams Come True.' What are your dreams, Curtiss? What are you going to do?"

"When I get out? My dear fellow, the world is a thousand oysters to me and lots of 'em with pearls for the picking. Next."

"'Connor, Ralph: The Sky Pilot.' Depends what you regard as pearls, doesn't it?"

"Of course. What about you? A man of your talents shouldn't have much difficulty. Acting, for instance. Ever appeared on the professional stage?"

"Yes, in America. 'Conquest, Joan: Desert Love.' I've no plans."

"'Desert Love.' I could be useful to you, Herrald. If

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you're up against it, or want something to do with a bit of adventure in it come to me."

" 'Conrad, Joseph: Almayer's Folly.' Very appropriate. Where shall I find you?"

"Seventeen Derwent Court, Maida Vale. Ask for Mr. Theodore. Got that? I can't write it down."

"Seventeen Derwent Court, Maida Vale. 'Conrad, Joseph: Lord Jim.' I'll not forget. Why Mr. Theodore?"

"Sort of *nom de guerre*."

The warder approached them. He stood over them watching Curtiss' painstaking pen.

"Next, please," said Curtiss.

"CONRAD, JOSEPH: The Arrow of Gold,'" said Hugo. He could not help admiring the other's coolness and dissimulation. The man would make an excellent actor. Probably he would also make an audacious criminal but Hugo, who was a shrewd judge of a man's character, thought that his coolness might desert him in a tight corner. His was the smooth, confident type that was apt to turn yellow if things went amiss.

They compiled another half dozen cards with the warder hovering in the background.

As the latter returned to his seat Curtiss asked—"Four months more, did you say? With that devil Brown, it's perfect hell."

Hugo's jaw tightened. "If I could see a way to escape I'd take a big risk," he said in a low voice.

"God! So should I," Curtiss breathed. "Get on with it. He's watching us."

" 'Dell, Ethel M.: The Way of an Eagle,'" said Hugo. "Seems to be the only way to get out of this place."

The prison bell began to ring and the warder getting to his feet called, "Time now."

Curtiss carefully blotted the last card. "Remember Seventeen Derwent Court, Maida Vale," he whispered.

"Mr. Theodore," said Hugo. He rose with a pile of books and carried them to the shelves.

The following week Curtiss was gone and his cell was occupied by a man named Kearney, a half-witted creature with a bestial face who had been convicted of an offence under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. His habits were naturally filthy and no amount of compulsory washing seemed to affect the dirt with which he was ingrained. Chief assistant-warder Brown noted with glee Hugo's instinctive movement of repulsion on his first contact with this man and duly exploited the situation.

"You birds will get on well together," he said with heavy jocularity. "Pretty matey with Gentleman Curtiss weren't you, Herrald? Well, a change does us all good."

Hugo found himself all but tied to the newcomer; was placed next him at meals, worked with him in the factory, dug by him in the fields and scrubbed by his side. These days were a drawn-out torture and he began to wonder how he could possibly resist an outbreak that would inevitably destroy any chance of remission of sentence.

It was about ten days later that he discovered that the lock of his cell was defective. Something had gone wrong with one of the wards so that after the key was turned the bolt was not fully shot, thus giving the door the appearance of being locked when in fact it could be easily opened with a little pressure. The moment Hugo realized this the possibility of escape leapt to his mind. For a long time that night he tossed restlessly on his bed only lying still when he heard the step of the patrol officer approaching his cell, lest the latter should pause to look through the observation window.

The gleam of hope soon faded. Suppose he were to escape from the cell, what then? The great buildings of the prison surrounded him, patrolled by half-a-dozen night-watchmen, and beyond there were the high enclosing walls. Even if he could avoid observation and reach the outer wall there was no hope of scaling it without a ladder or, at least, a rope. To obtain a rope he would require to gain access to the stores and that involved obtaining a key. By morning his mood was one of despair. The difficulties were too formidable and at any moment the defective lock might be discovered and put right.

Nevertheless he did not abandon hope altogether. It occurred to him that if he could gain the necessary time it might be possible to plan a method of escape. The chief danger lay in the immediate discovery of the condition of the lock. That day, in the carpenter's workshop, he managed to make a couple of small wooden wedges, which he secreted inside his shirt and succeeded in conveying to his cell. They served their purpose admirably and as soon as the key had been turned he fitted them tightly into the door.

Three days later the ingenious Brown set him along with Kearney to the task of cleaning out and re-stoking the furnaces in the boiler-house. For some time past certain prisoners had been grumbling that the bathwater was not properly hot, and a drop in the temperature of the buildings suggested that the steamheating was not functioning as usual. The reason was instantly apparent to Hugo. Extensive repairs were being made to the piping system. The boiler house itself formed part of the prison wall and the workmen had found it necessary to construct a narrow tunnel in the foundations which led behind the furnaces into a field beyond the wall. The mouth of this tunnel was covered by an iron frame-work which did not look very strong. As he worked by the furnaces Hugo was able to examine this covering fairly closely and came to the conclusion that if a determined man were to attack it with one of the iron rakes, used in cleaning out the furnaces, he would be able to force it aside and crawl through the tunnel.

No sooner had this desperate plan formed in his mind than Hugo became eager to put it to the test. He thought it improbable that the boiler-house was kept locked at night, but, in any event, he had seen the key hanging on a board beside the warders' common-room and it should not be difficult to secure this in the middle of the night. His spirits revived. In the coincidence of the defective lock and the tunnel fate had given him a chance that he must not miss. It was now or never. As he shoveled fuel into the furnace every fibre of him thrilled in anticipation of the adventure. The foretaste of freedom was like a new relish to the palate, a sharp thing that filled him with a zest for life he had not known for months.

When he was in bed and the cell lights had been extinguished and the wedges placed in his door, he began to think things out. He was aware that between eleven and five o'clock in the morning only one warder patrolled the two floors of cells in the southwest wing. The floors were really open galleries connected at either end by an iron spiral staircase. The officer's custom was to walk round both sides of the upper gallery then to descend and walk round both sides of the lower gallery before returning to the upper. He moved slowly, often pausing for considerable periods to lean against the railing or to peer in at the observation window of a cell. Hugo's cell was in the middle of the upper gallery and at one end of this, beyond the staircase, was an archway leading into a corridor, which contained the prisoners' baths and lavatories. The corridor in turn led to a flight of stone steps that descended to a wide hall-way from which doors and passages opened to other parts of the prison. To reach the boiler house it would be necessary to go along one of these passages, pass through a door and cross the big exercise yard. It would also be necessary to allow for all sorts of contingencies, including the possibility of having to dodge other patrols and take cover in some place of concealment. Further, Hugo had to take into account the delay involved in gaining access to the boiler-house and breaking open the mouth of the tunnel. All this would take up a considerable time, a time that would be far greater than that required to make a circuit of the galleries. Accordingly he had to provide against the possibility of the night patrolman looking through the observation window after he had left the cell.

THE plan he devised was a simple one. He would make a dummy and place it in the bed so that anyone looking through the window would be deceived into thinking that he was lying there asleep. Colonel Faber was something of an economist and the gallery was not brightly lit during the night. Within the cell everything was in semi-darkness, the only light being that which filtered through the grating in the door. He must slip out unobserved while the patrol was moving along the gallery immediately below, and it was essential that he should do this without making any sound that would call attention to his movements. The dummy would have to be fixed in the bed in the interval between the officer passing the cell door and reaching the lower gallery.

With the utmost stealth Hugo proceeded to carry out his plan. Divesting himself of his sleeping-suit he put on shirt, breeches, stockings and felt slippers. Then he collected his jacket, his boots, a pair of socks and a woolen scarf and thrust them, together with his pajamas, underneath the bed where they would be ready to his hand for the swift construction of the dummy. This took some time, as he must move with the utmost caution, and thrice in the course of the operation he had to get into bed and cover himself with the blanket while the officer passed his door. But at

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last he was ready and lay down dressed for his adventure and feigning deep sleep. He realized that the clothes he was wearing were scarcely suitable for a bitter night in the open air and that if he retained them his appearance would inevitably lead to his recognition and recapture. But if all went well and his absence was unnoticed he would put many miles between himself and the prison before morning. Somehow or other he must contrive to secure other clothing during the night or lie hidden until he could obtain it. For this he was prepared to trust to luck.

Time dragged. He began to think that the prison clock had stopped when suddenly its harsh bell began to strike the hour of midnight. In the gallery the silence was broken by deep breathings, occasional coughs, the restless movements of sleepers turning upon their beds and the tread of the warder. The officer stopped once and peered through the window at Hugo lying in bed, apparently in a deep slumber, with the blanket pulled up to his chin. So long did he pause that for a few hideous moments Hugo thought that he must have observed something untoward. But at last he moved on, whistling a contented little tune under his breath.

The watch was changed at two o'clock in the morning and Hugo judged that the best time to make his attempt would be between one and two when the present patrol was growing sleepy and inclined to be less observant. After what seemed an eternity the clock struck one. He made up his mind to move on the first opportunity after half-past the hour had sounded. Again came an endless nerve-racking wait with his mind an agonized chaos of swinging hopes and fears. He could not, he must not fail. All that was necessary was a little coolness and courage and freedom would be a reality.

Boom! The bell tolled the half hour. The warder was approaching his cell along the gallery. A sudden, uncanny silence seemed to have fallen upon the prison, as though all the inmates of the cells were holding their breaths. Hugo would have felt better if the man next door would only snore as he so often did. The patrolling footsteps drew nearer, stopped a moment at the next door, then came on and passed Hugo's cell. He must act at once and very swiftly. In a second he was out of bed and before the warder had reached the opposite side of the upper gallery he was working in feverish silence at his dummy. He made a loose bundle of the lower blanket and placed it under the upper to convey the impression of a body. Then he rolled up his prison packet, buttoned his pajama jacket around it, stuffed one of the sleeves with the pajama trousers, and placed this outside the coverlet to indicate the sleeper's arm. A boot, wrapped in a pair of socks and placed upon the pillow, sufficiently suggested a head. For a moment he stood contemplating his handiwork. Even in that dim light it looked crude enough but, he reflected, the warder's eyes were accustomed to the brightness outside and would be readily deceived in glancing through the window at the shadowy interior.

THE officer was now passing along the lower story on the opposite side, moving at a steady pace. Hugo crept to the door and softly withdrew the wedges. He crouched there hardly daring to breathe. Presently he could hear the officer's step immediately below and next moment he had slipped out and quickly closed the door after him.

Tiptoeing along the gallery he reached the mouth of the corridor and slipped into one of the lavatories. The warder was already ascending the stairs and the corridor might have come into his line of vision before Hugo had time to traverse its length. But this was easy. Too easy, perhaps, Hugo told himself as he stood there with his pulses drumming in his ears. The officer passed unsuspectingly on his way and Hugo waited until he had completed the upper circuit and was once more descending the staircase, before he came from his hiding place and ran lightly along the corridor.

Here the light was dim and it was clear that the hallway beyond was only very partially illuminated. So much the better, thought Hugo as he reached the top of the stone steps. He would go part of the way down and take stock of the position before making his dash to the yard.

Still running noiselessly, he had descended several steps when he stopped with a jerk. A warder was ascending and in the upturned face Hugo recognized the scowling features and heavy jowl of Brown. Both stood staring.

"Ho ho!" said Brown. His ugly mouth widened to a grin, his hand moved to his pocket. In a moment he would blow his whistle.

After an instant of paralyzing fear Hugo was seized by an overmastering rage. Between him and freedom stood his tormentor and he knew that he would be given and must give no quarter. Without further hesitation he launched himself at his enemy. His position on the steps gave him an advantage and he crashed his fist with all the force he could muster into that ugly, smiling, hated face. The swift movement took the warder by surprise. He made an ineffective attempt to ward off the blow, then staggered back beneath its weight and went tumbling down to the bottom of the steps where he lay still.

IN that quiet place, and to Hugo's hearing, the sound of Brown's fall was like the crash of a thunderbolt. As he bent over the bulky body it seemed to him that the whole prison must inevitably wake to a clamorous response. But the silence was heavier than before. He saw that the warder was breathing and that a trickle of blood came from his skull. Consciousness might return at any moment. Snatching the warder's keys, he sped across the hall and ran down the passage.

The door giving on to the exercise yard was locked but he knew the key that was used for all the external doors and the next minute he was in the yard. The whole place was blanketed in a cold, penetrating mist which restricted vision to a couple of yards. Accepting this as an omen that his good fortune still held he groped his way to the boiler house.

The door was open but the place was in absolute darkness. He paused to recover his breath. Momentarily he was at a loss. In this black hole he could not see to work on the tunnel covering, while to switch on the light might attract attention to the boiler-house before he had time to complete his task. Then as his eyes adjusted themselves to the darkness he saw a faint glow at the far end of the building. Moving quickly toward it he opened one of the furnace doors and found that he had just sufficient light for his purpose. Blue flames leapt and curled over a caked mass of incandescent fuel. The opening to the tunnel resolved itself out of the shadows and he seized one of the long rakes.

As he struck the first blow there came a piercing whistle from somewhere across the yard and next moment the electric alarm bell was sounding its warning all over the prison. He worked furiously, striking blow after blow, levering and prizing with straining muscles while the sweat ran down his face and body. The iron frame-work was beginning to give, but it seemed to him that he could never wrench it from its hold before the warders would be upon him to drag him back. The energy of despair was in him and he worked like a maniac. Suddenly the frame gave way and he found himself lying on his back, his chest laboring as he panted for breath. A clamor filled his ears and he had a vision of lights springing up everywhere and of warders armed with rifles closing in upon him from all directions.

Hoping that the boiler-house would escape attention for a time he closed the furnace door. Then he crept into the tunnel. It was a tight squeeze but fortunately its length was not more than fifteen feet and presently he struggled out into a muddy trench, whence he clambered into a sodden field. Here he stood up and stretched himself, drinking in great gulps of the foggy atmosphere. Freedom! It was marvelous to feel that there were no constricting walls about one, that the world around was a great empty region with no barriers, a limitless space that stretched away and away into the misty darkness. "By heaven," Hugo muttered, "they'll never catch me now."

The alarm bell had stopped ringing, but he could hear occasional shouts from within the prison. In all probability they were searching the buildings on the assumption that he was hiding somewhere and it might be a considerable time before they reached the boiler-house and discovered his escape. With luck he would have, say, twenty minutes' start. He turned and set off at an easy run in the direction of Bellinghurst woods. The mist that clung to his hair and shirt, the cold air that clutched his throat, were part of his freedom. Although the wet ground soon soaked his felt slippers his spirits rose at every step. He had no other clothes, no money, no food, no prospects, he had no idea whither he was bound or what he was going to do, but he did not care. Prison lay behind him blotted out in the darkness and mist, like a nightmare that was blotted from the memory as one awoke to full consciousness.

A dark wall of vegetation suddenly loomed in front of him and he clambered over the fence into the woods, thrusting his way among the slippery roots and dead leaves. As he paused to gather his sense of direction there came across

the fields from the direction of the prison a confused medley of cries and the barking of dogs. Already they were on his track.

CHAPTER X

THE thick mist that had swirled and writhed all night, blotting out the landmarks, lifted somewhat toward dawn as Hugo flung himself exhausted amidst the bushes on the river bank. He was too utterly wearied to do more than lie face downward in a kind of stupor upon the ground as he had fallen. In his ears there still echoed the hoarse shouts of his pursuers, the bark of the dogs and the noise of the motor cars with which they sought to stretch a cordon round the area of his wanderings. His coarse clothes clung heavily to his body, soaked by his swimming across the river to throw the hounds off his track. He had run miles and miles in that God-sent mist, dragging himself through copse and hedge, avoiding as far as possible any semblance of a road or pathway, but moving, for aught he knew, in a circle. His luck still held, for he did not know the country through which he traveled, and at any moment he might run into the arms of people who would recognize his ugly garments and seize him. He had met nobody. Once or twice in the last hour he had heard footsteps and voices, sounding muffled through the fog, but up till now he had succeeded in remaining hidden.

Presently he sat up and looked about him. The protecting mist was now showing a diaphanous pearl-gray and through its dissolution there was a hint of sunrise. He suffered from no illusion that he had passed through the most dangerous part of his flight. He must obtain other clothes as quickly as possible or find an absolutely secure hiding place where he could remain until darkness had once more fallen. He must also get something to eat, for he was ravenous. Daylight and the dissipation of the mist would very soon render both tasks increasingly difficult. He had no idea how far he was from Bellinghurst, or whether the river he had just crossed was the Ewe or a stream in some other valley. The growing light was gradually disclosing a topography of undulating country, with scattered copses of beechwood, while the river was fringed by a depressing line of willows and alder bushes between which it moved slowly and muddily. Across the stream he discerned the gable of what he judged to be a farm house amidst the trees. Of other habitation there was no sign, but a well worn path ran parallel with the water on the side where he sat.

He determined to follow the path. For fifty yards it bordered the river then swung to the left and, passing through a copse, ended at a stile that gave access to a narrow road, sunk between high banks. His teeth chattered as he crept miserably along the deserted road in the chill dawn. The triumphant glow of freedom attained had long since left him and had been succeeded by a desperate, half-hopeless energy born of the instinct of self-preservation. Now his body felt utterly weary and listless and the cold was beginning to numb his mind. If a policeman had appeared round the corner at that moment he would almost have welcomed him.

Suddenly he came upon a wide gateway leading past a small uninhabited lodge, painted a dirty yellow, to an ill-kept drive that wound between clumps of laurels. A large notice-board fixed on one side of the rusty padlocked gate brought him to an immediate halt. He read:

"FOR SALE OR TO LET, FURNISHED

"Fine Georgian Residence, facing South, consisting of hall with antique carved oak staircase, fine lounge or drawing-room, two other excellent reception rooms, eight bedrooms, two baths and all modern conveniences. Co.'s electric light and water. Wealth of Period Fixtures. Garage. Walled Garden and fifty acres of paddock and woodland. Sacrificial Price or low rental will be accepted as owner is on duty in foreign parts. Details, keys and permit to view from Kettlewell, Barry & Co., Land Agents, Maddingly."

"This is the place for me," murmured Hugo and proceeded to scale the low wall. He passed behind the lodge, made his way through the dripping laurels and presently came round a corner of the drive on to a terrace in front of a handsome, three-storied house with wide, bow-fronted windows on the ground floor. Although the whole place had an air of neglect that immediately justified the "sacrificial price" which the owner was prepared to accept, it had not the appearance of having been unoccupied for long. There were blinds in all the windows, pulled down to varying lengths, and a glance into one of the ground floor rooms revealed a well furnished interior partly shrouded in dust sheets. The front door was a massive affair of oak and iron, framed in an embryonic portico.

Hugo wished he had had the experience of a professional burglar. For the first time in his life he was about to break and enter a dwelling house and he had very little idea of the proper procedure. The front of the mansion looked impregnable, the door was locked, the windows were all bolted and he had no house-breaking tools. In any event it would be extremely inadvisable to do anything to the front of the building that would be the least likely to attract attention.

Nevertheless, into the house he must get. He was overwhelmingly sleepy and a penetrating wind was springing up that seemed to search out his vitals. Beneath that roof there was shelter from the deadly cold, safe refuge for his exhausted body and the possibility, at least, of clothing. Skirting what might have been a croquet-lawn he made his way round to the back. Here there was a wide yard on one side of which were a garage and workshop, and on the other a range of out-houses consisting of coal-store, larder and wash-house. The latter abutted on the back of the mansion and all the lower windows were barred, but Hugo saw that by getting on to the top of the coal-store he could easily reach the ledge of a small window on the second floor. Even if he were forced to smash a pane of glass it promised the most unobtrusive entrance. In a corner of the yard was a heap consisting of old petrol tins, a wooden box, an oil drum, some empty bottles and a litter of odds and ends, amongst which he found a discarded kitchen knife and a rusty spanner and a chisel. In a few minutes, he had provided a somewhat precarious ascent by placing the box with the oil drum and a selection of petrol tins on top against the coal-house wall; then putting the knife and spanner in his breeches pocket he climbed his artificial mound and pulled himself on to the roof. As he swung himself up the pile gave way and the tins went clattering to the ground making a hideous din that might have been heard as far away as the road. It was fortunate that there was no occupant of the lodge.

The window through which he was now able to look belonged to a large and well-appointed bathroom, and, as he anticipated, was securely bolted. For a time he worked at it with a view to forcing it open but his fingers were blue with cold and the knife broke. At last he smashed the glass with the spanner in the neighborhood of the fastening, and putting his hand through the opening, released the catch. Next minute he was inside and, having closed the window, he examined his surroundings. They suggested that their owner was no novice in the ablutionary arts. The walls were white enameled and the floor was lined with a tiled rubber linoleum delightfully soft and warm to the feet. The bath was of a fine porcelain finish and had an array of chromium plated taps and a little basket in which there lay a worn scrubbing brush and a piece of desiccated but still eminently usable toilet soap.

HUGO glanced at himself in the mirror. He presented a villainous spectacle. His thick hair was matted and untidy, mud had dried on his face which was white and strained, his hands were filthy and his clothing was stained and torn. "Any decent citizen would want to shoot me at sight," he told himself grimly. He turned on one of the taps and after a preliminary gurgling water flowed into the bath. Well, a good wash was almost as essential as a change of clothing. The opportunity was not one to be missed and he determined to have a bath as soon as he had explored the house.

The bathroom opened off a wide landing from one side of which the carved oak staircase of the advertisement descended to the hall. A smaller stairway led to the third floor. On the landing were five bedrooms. He examined these in turn and found them all furnished with a confused agglomeration of pieces, antique, pseudo-antique and modern, but mostly of a peculiarly ferocious Victorian period, some of which looked so immovable that they doubtless formed part of the "wealth of Period Fixtures." The two rooms to the front were particularly spacious apartments, off one of which there opened a second bathroom, as luxurious as the first, but devoid of soap. To his disappointment the wardrobes and cupboards were absolutely empty and there wasn't an article of clothing anywhere. On each bed, however, lay a couple of folded blankets and this gave him an idea. Taking one of the blankets and a dust sheet he returned to the bathroom, removed his wet clothing and

with a foot of icy water in the bath, proceeded to give himself a thorough scrubbing. It took some time to remove the dirt and the wash was the coldest he had experienced since he had broken the ice on his tin tub one winter's morning at his public-school, but a vigorous rubbing down with the dust sheet soon sent the warm blood rushing through his veins. Wrapping the blanket round him he restored the sheet to its position and threw his sodden clothes into a cupboard, except the felt slippers which he put on his bare feet. Already he faced the prospect of having to remain hidden in the house until nightfall. Only then would it be possible to light a fire and dry the garments without a smoking chimney attracting the notice of inquisitive neighbors.

Clad in his blanket like a Great White Chief he descended the carved staircase and continued his tour of inspection. The hall was tiled in a pattern of blue and terra-cotta pink, rather offensive to the eye, and the furniture consisted mainly of a long table, ring-marked where hot dishes had destroyed the veneer, a long oak settle that bore the date "1705" and a mid-Victorian grandfather clock. The fireplace and overmantel which had an "Adam" appearance was probably one of the "period fixtures." Some letters, bearing half-penny stamps, lay on the table. They contained circulars, a bill from a wine-merchant and a notice regarding the quarterly meeting of the Maddingly and District Rural Institute Association. They were all addressed to Sir Cuthbert Eversley C.B., who was doubtless the owner on duty in foreign parts. The lounge or drawing-room lay on one side of the hall and was noteworthy by reason of a magnificent chandelier converted to electricity, and a large portrait in oils of a florid gentleman with a walrus mustache who was seated at a desk with some papers in his hand and who, as an inscription testified, was Sir Cuthbert himself. Across the hall was a library full of standard works, and a dining-room with a sideboard full of spoons and forks which Hugo eyed with disdain. Possibly a haul for a real burglar; but their glitter afforded him no satisfactory impression. Infinitely he would have preferred to smell frying bacon. The sight of these utensils reminded him how hungry he was and he passed into the butler's pantry. Here there was a large cupboard fitted with sliding doors. The top shelves contained dishes of various kinds and on one of the lower shelves amongst some tins of boot-polish and other cleansing substances he came across a tin half full of McVitie and Price's Digestive biscuits. Taking a handful of biscuits he proceeded to the kitchen where further investigation produced a tin of sardines. The opening of this presented no great obstacle and presently he seated himself at the kitchen table and made a satisfactory breakfast. To a hungry man any sort of food tastes good, but these little fishes laid upon biscuits proved to be the most fascinating combination in his experience and he made a mental note of it for use in happier circumstances. He returned to the pantry for fresh supplies and when at last he rose with a sigh and threw away the empty sardine tin he felt that life was once more not a thing of chill and sodden hopelessness, but the exciting adventure he had always known it to be.

THE house was airless and he felt very drowsy. He had come through an exhausting experience and some sleep was an essential prelude to further effort. It was now full daylight. The sun was shining in the clear sky of a windy March morning, pouring a flood of warmth into the east window of the large front bedroom, as he rolled himself up in the blankets and lay down upon the bed. He could only guess at the time, but judged that he could take at least a couple of hours' sleep in perfect safety. A delicious torpor invaded his limbs. He felt curiously little anxiety as to the future. Somehow or other he must manage to reach London where he was determined to seek out "Mr. Theodore." He repeated the address, "Seventeen Derwent Court, Maida Vale." Curtiss would help him. He had the whole day in which to work out his plans. Meantime sleep was what he wanted. Just a couple of hours. His eyes closed and he speculated drowsily on the personality of Sir Cuthbert Eversley whose hospitality he so unexpectedly enjoyed. Deep slumber overcame him. He dreamt that he was back in Bellinghurst prison, of which Lewis Carter, dressed in the uniform of an Admiral, was the governor. Dora Carter was his gaoler and had locked him in a cell furnished with a rich carpet and divans littered with colored cushions. There was no window in the cell and it was insufferably warm and airless. Every now and then Dora opened the door and, gliding in, sat beside him on a divan where she put her arms round him and kissed him. Her face was hideously expressionless like a mask and her eyes were as cold as pebbles. He shrank from her and tried to beat her off, but the hot scented air filled his lungs to suffocation and made him weak and powerless to resist. He loathed her, and he hated Daisy Elliston, who came with her and stood at the door, her fat body shaking with her high-pitched, silly laugh. Then Curtiss appeared, smiling and debonair, and led him out of the cell, saying in his pleasant drawling voice, "Don't let these stupid women worry you. Henceforward women are your enemies, just as they are my prey. Come with me." He led Hugo along a corridor where the air was still stifling and suddenly they came upon a number of warders carrying a coffin. "Whose funeral is that?" Hugo asked apprehensively. "Brown's" was the answer, and Hugo hurried on shivering despite the heat. Presently he found himself alone in Sir Cuthbert Eversley's bedroom. People were talking outside. Some one with a voice very like Dora Carter's was arguing with a man who seemed to be trying to prevent her from entering.

CHAPTER XI

HE AWOKE and sat up with a start. Full consciousness of his surroundings rushed upon him as he realized that the voices were real and that there were people outside on the landing. The sun was now streaming in at the front window and he must have slept for hours. Was he trapped? He hadn't a stitch of clothing and if these people found him he couldn't hope to escape.

"Don't tell me you forgot to bring the tape-measure, George," a woman's voice was saying.

"It's in my suitcase in the car," said a man's voice.

"How stupid of you not to have it in your pocket. Run down and fetch it."

"All right, my dear."

A heavy tread was heard descending the stairs to the hall. "You see, Mr. Kettlewell," said the woman, "we shouldn't dream of taking the house unless my own stair carpet will fit. It's a very special one and my husband has all the measurements."

"I quite understand, madam," said another man's voice. "Of course, Sir Cuthbert's is rather worn, but if it was only for a matter of a few months—"

"Worn is putting it mildly, Mr. Kettlewell. It's absolutely threadbare. And those awful tiles in the hall! I have a large seamless Axminster that might cover them. I must have the measurements there also."

"Certainly. Of course you will realize that Sir Cuthbert is anxious to sell rather than to let. Otherwise he might have renewed some of the furnishings. The fact is, madam, that he obtained the governorship of one of the West Indian colonies rather—er—unexpectedly and had to leave in a great hurry to take up his position. Lady Eversley wouldn't let him go alone and so all the arrangements with regard to the house were left in our hands. Unfortunately the gardener who lived in the lodge left ten days ago and there has been nobody about since. But prior to that the house was kept regularly aired and fired and I'm satisfied you will find everything in excellent condition."

"Well, we shall see." The lady sounded skeptical. "Is that you, George? Have you got the tape?"

"Here it is, my dear," said the first man. He was breathing heavily as a result of hurrying up the stairs and Hugo pictured somebody like the portrait of Sir Cuthbert. "Shall we start now?"

"Of course not. We haven't been over the house yet. There's no use taking measurements if the house is unsuitable. What is on this floor, Mr. Kettlewell?"

"Five bedrooms and two bathrooms," Mr. Kettlewell replied. "Perhaps you would care to see the front rooms first. This one faces south and west and has a bathroom off."

To Hugo's immense relief the visitors moved into the other front room. "Heaven bless you, Mr. Kettlewell," he murmured as he slipped off the bed. He looked all round the room again seeking concealment, but the only possible place was the wardrobe, where he would have had to go if the land-agent had elected to start with the south-east aspect—a very unsafe hiding-place, because it was reasonable to suppose that George and his wife would open the wardrobe door. He could imagine nothing more humiliating than to be caught in a wardrobe with only a blanket to hide his nakedness. Hastily donning his slippers he

pulled the blanket closely about him, tiptoed from the room and stood listening on the landing. He heard their voices, but could not distinguish what they were saying and judged that they must be inspecting the front bathroom. Now was his chance to slip downstairs and hide under the dust sheets in the drawing-room. Very cautiously he crept down to the hall. The front door stood wide open and framed a pretty picture of a large gray touring car, in the sunshine beyond, besides which lay a suitcase, placed there, no doubt, to facilitate George's search for the tape-measure. On the hall table was a man's heavy overcoat and soft hat. The sight of these objects gave Hugo an idea. George's overcoat would cover his immediate nudity and George's suitcase probably contained other clothing, with the help of which he could continue his way. It would be necessary to wait, however, until its owner and his companions were inspecting the back rooms, lest they might look out of a window and catch him in the act. At that moment he heard them coming on to the landing above and hid behind the angle of the stairs. They were a long time in the room he had vacated and he was just beginning to wonder whether he could have left some trace of his occupation when they came out again.

"DON'T you think we might measure the stairs now?" George was asking.

"Certainly not," his wife retorted. "I'm by no means satisfied that the house is suitable."

"Of course you're seeing it at a disadvantage," Mr. Kettlewell urged. "The rooms are somewhat dusty and it's clear that the gardener and his wife haven't been doing all they might. I can't think why they left a blanket lying so untidily on that bed" ('Why on earth didn't I fold the confounded thing!' murmured Hugo). "Wait till you see the house with all the furniture uncovered and flowers in the rooms and fires on, as I've seen it in Sir Cuthbert's occupation; it looks very different I assure you, madam. Now there's another fine bathroom on this floor. If you'll step this way . . . "

The voices died away and Hugo came from his hiding place. The bathroom would keep them for a few minutes and as he had cleaned up the glass and pulled down the blind they might not observe the broken window. Even if they did discover it they would not at once connect it with the presence of a stranger in the house. He ran to the table, seized the hat and coat, turned into the drawing-room where he discarded the blanket and stuffed it under a sofa, put on the hat and coat, came back to the hall, listened a moment, then, hearing nothing, scurried down the front steps, grabbed the suitcase and made a bee-line for the shelter of the laurels. Within a couple of minutes he was running through the woods as fast as the overcoat would let him and with the suitcase banging against his shins as he stumbled over the uneven ground. So far as he could judge he was traveling roughly parallel with the road and away from the river he had crossed before dawn. The trees grew thicker and presently he came to a wall which probably marked the boundary of Sir Cuthbert's woodland. He crossed this and descended a wooded slope into a moss-covered dingle where a little stream meandered amongst dead leaves and fern roots.

He would have preferred to put a greater distance between himself and the house but he could not afford to run the risk of emerging into the open where he might meet people who would be surprised at the bare legs below the overcoat. This garment fitted him fairly well and suggested that George must be like himself, a man of more than average height. The hat was rather too big, resting uncomfortably on the tips of his ears, but that at least was better than one perched on the top of his head. Thus it was with reasonable anticipation of a suitable selection that he knelt down by the stream and opened the suitcase.

He was not disappointed for it contained a dinner suit, a pair of flannel trousers and a Harris tweed jacket, a dress collar and shirt with two gold studs, a cotton shirt with collars to match, a pair of brown shoes, a selection of socks, handkerchiefs and ties, a well stocked sponge bag which included a safety razor, brushes, slippers, hair-oil, a box of pills and a book on ethnology. In five minutes he was scrambling up the opposite bank, quite presentable in a blue striped shirt and collar, flannel trousers and tweed jacket and hat and overcoat. George's shoes pinched him somewhat and he hoped that it would not be necessary to walk very far in them. In stuffing the sponge-bag into the overcoat pocket he discovered a shilling and four pennies, which somehow or other must suffice him till he got to London. He strode through the woods at a good pace, taking deep breaths of the keen air, feeling very vigorous and alert and extraordinarily interested and excited in the adventure of life. Every man's hand was against him; he was an outlaw for whose downfall and capture all the forces of the police, backed by the army, the navy and public opinion were being marshalled. It was strange how easily one fell into a life of crime. Within a few hours he had assaulted a warder, broken into a private house, stolen a bath, purloined sardines and biscuits and now he had appropriated a suit of clothes and a sum of money. He found himself regretting that he had not made off with George's car, but a moment's reflection showed that this might have been fatal as he would have had to drive an indefinite distance clad only in the overcoat.

After proceeding for a quarter of a mile he came to a gate in a thick hedge leading on to the road. He was about to pass through this when he heard the sound of a motor-car approaching from behind him. As it swept round the bend he flung himself flat beneath the hedge and watched it go by. To his horror he recognized the big gray touring car. An elderly female of a very determined aspect was at the wheel, with a distressed looking gentleman by her side, while another man was seated behind. Obviously George and his wife had discovered their loss and were now racing to the nearest police-station to report the matter.

Hugo arose cursing. He hadn't foreseen this. Somehow he had imagined that they would go over the whole house and take their measurements before looking outside, but doubtless George had observed that the suitcase was no longer standing where he had left it. Here was a pretty problem. To go on might be to court disaster, but to remain where he was seemed to be equally dangerous and the inactivity would be maddening. He decided that he must try to get out of the district as quickly as possible. With this in view he started to walk at a brisk pace down the road in the direction taken by the car and after covering some three hundred yards without meeting anybody he came to a cross-road where there was a finger-post. He read its directions with rising excitement. Straight ahead was "to Maddingly 2 miles," behind him "to Foxton 5 miles," left, "to Bellinghurst 7 miles," right, "to Maddingly station ½ mile." So after all his tribulations, he was only seven miles from the prison!

He turned to the right and made off at a run for Maddingly Station.

He had not gone far when he once more heard a car coming up behind. There was no time to conceal himself had he wished to do so and he hurried on, hoping that the car would pass without noticing him particularly. To his horror it pulled up suddenly with squeaking brakes a few yards ahead of him. It was an ancient four-seater saloon and a man seated beside the driver put his head out of the window and called "Say, mister, d'you mean to catch the one-ten? Because if you do you'd best hop inside. We'll just about make it in the old bus, but you'll never do it on foot."

"Thanks," cried Hugo, relieved to learn that there was an immediate train to anywhere. He got into the back seat.

"Step on the gas, Bill," his interlocutor urged the driver. "We've only about a couple o' minutes."

Bill responded and the little car swayed and bounded over the bumpy road in a crescendo of squeaks and rattlings. Hugo judged his companions to be of the farming class. Bill was a broad-shouldered, stolid-looking countryman of middle age while the other man was small, younger, red-haired and ferrety-faced, with a loud checked cap pulled over one ear and a cigarette stuck behind the other.

"HE'D never 'ave done it, would 'e, Bill?" said the first man as they roared along.

"No, Jim—not this side o' gaol, 'e wouldn't," Bill agreed with an appositeness that fairly startled Hugo.

"I'm much obliged to you," said Hugo. "I'm very anxious to catch the one-ten. My watch must be slow."

The car swept into a station yard and pulled up with a terrific jerk just as the guard of a train, standing at the adjacent platform, blew his whistle and waved his flag.

"Come on," yelled Jim and tumbled out of the car with a waterproof in one hand and a couple of white Leghorn cockerels in the other. Hugo followed him helter-skelter across the platform and into an empty third-class compartment. At the same moment the train began to move.

"Phew!" Jim gasped, tilting back his cap and wiping his brow. "That was a close shave. No time to get tickets, nor nothin'. Goin' far?"

"Not very," Hugo answered cautiously. He was trying to calculate what distance one could travel by railway for one and fourpence and wondering whether one could rely on a train which stopped at a station like Maddingly being a local train which would not carry him miles beyond the capacity of his purse. He had no desire to incur the suspicion of railway officials. "Where are you bound for?" he asked to gain time.

"Binstead, two stations down the line," Jim answered. He seemed very ready to talk. "Been there?" he asked in turn.

"Yes, many years ago," Hugo lied. "Quite a nice place."

"I dunno about nice. Depends what you call nice." Jim took the cigarette from behind his ear and lit it. "I should call it a one-horse place. Wouldn't go there only I've got a girl there who lives with her mother. I'm taking them birds to the old lady as a peace offering. Got a poultry farm of me own between Maddingly and Bellinghurst. Know Bellinghurst?"

"No," said Hugo firmly.

"Queer thing happened there during the night. P'raps you didn't 'ear about it. Prisoner escaped from Bellinghurst gaol."

"Not really!"

"Sure thing. Bill got the whole story this morning. They say 'e socked four or five warders and got through a hole in the wall. They were searchin' for 'im all night with guns and motor head-lamps and now they've drawn a cordon right round Bellinghurst woods where they think 'e's lyin'. Poor devil! Hasn't an earthly chance if 'e's still there."

Hugo nodded. "I expect they've got him by now."

"I dunno. There was a chap got clear away three years ago soon after the prison was opened. I always says that 'istory, like the onion, 'as the 'abit of repeatin' itself. Now if this bloke 'ad the savey to pinch a motor-car—there's always plenty lyin' around."

"Perhaps he never thought of that." Hugo was decidedly uncomfortable. Doubtless it was his self-consciousness, but he had a feeling that the little man was eyeing him keenly and that something more than the desire to be conversational might lie behind his remarks. What a fool he'd been not to say that he was getting out at Binstead also. To leave the train there might be to court suspicion on the part of Jim, but, on the other hand, if he traveled further he might not be able to pay his fare, and there was always the risk that following George's complaint to the police the latter would cause a message to be sent to all stations along the line warning the officials to look out for a man wearing flannel trousers, a dark brown overcoat and a brown hat. Moreover, he now realized that the train was carrying him away from London and would eventually take him over the Downs to the sea. Unless he could return to London and obtain assistance and disguise from Mr. Theodore he could not hope to elude capture much longer. He determined to leave the train at the station beyond Binstead and say he had joined it at Binstead. That ought to be well within the compass of his one and fourpence. Then he must set about obtaining a shave and another coat and hat. Wistfully he eyed Jim's cap and waterproof.

Jim continued to chat, and partly to head him off Bellinghurst, partly to appear frank and communicative Hugo launched into an animated account of his experiences as a commercial traveler in dictionaries, encyclopaedias and other volumes of instruction. This seemed to satisfy Jim who, while admitting that he wasn't a reader himself, suggested that Mr. Pennington (Hugo) might call upon him after his marriage as his girl was very well educated and but for her mother's rheumatism might have been a school teacher. The train stopped at a station of which Hugo, in the throes of invention, did not observe the name and presently ran into Binstead.

"Well, s'long," said Jim gathering up his cockerels and waterproof.

"Good-bye," said Hugo, "and tell your friend Bill when next you see him how very obliged I was for that lift."

CHAPTER XII

THE train was gathering speed. It appeared to be running down an incline. Houses, trees, telegraph posts flashed by at an ever increasing pace. Presently it ran through a station and a few minutes later through another. To his utter dismay Hugo realized that what had been a local train was turning itself into an express. From Binstead to its next stop was bound to be more than one and fourpence worth.

To the accompaniment of grinding brakes the train entered another cutting, and Hugo was just beginning to think of the most plausible excuse to offer to the ticket-collector when he suddenly found himself in the darkness of a tunnel. The brakes were applied with increasing force, the speed was reduced to a crawl, then the train stopped with a jerk.

Hugo leant out of the window on the right hand side. The engine and the first three carriages were beyond the exit of the tunnel, while his own compartment was some ten yards within its mouth. No lights had been switched on and beyond the rear of the train the tunnel was fairly dark. There was no sign of the guard and the only other passenger who was leaning out on that side was some distance ahead and looking toward the engine.

IT was now or never. Next moment he was on the line, and, crouching low beside the train, he ran along to the rear. As he passed the guard's van the engine whistled shrilly and the train moved out of the tunnel. Hugo stood watching it until it disappeared round a curve in the line, then following in its wake emerged, blinking a little in the strong light, between two steep grassy banks topped by wire fences. The quickening puff-puff of the engine died away in the distance.

He chose the right-hand bank and ascended cautiously until he was in a position to peep over the top. The view was sufficiently reassuring. In front of him was a large field, red and new ploughed and stretching upward to a wooded skyline, on the far side of which three men were scattering seed beneath a small cloud of birds. On the left a roadway wound past some white cottages to a level crossing which had evidently held up the train. On the right was an expanse of open heathland interspersed with trees and rocky hillocks. Behind him, to the south, was a broad valley, with the long line of the Downs beyond, shutting off the sea. The scene, flooded as it was with spring sunshine, was wholly peaceful and charming and but for the keen wind coming out of the northwest the air would have held a summer warmth. It was good to be alive and free.

He crossed the wire, hurried along the edge of the plough, and climbing above the tunnel entrance made off along a path that led across the windy heath, walking at a rapid pace. The lay-out of the country struck familiar chords in his memory. Once he had been driven forty miles or so out of London for a day's golf in this neighborhood. The name of the place escaped him for the moment, but as he topped one of the hillocks he spied a line of telegraph poles about half a mile distant that marked the main road on the other side of the heath and, beyond, a long low white building amongst some trees which he instantly recognized as the golf clubhouse. If his recollection were sound, then the large stone building a little to the right was an hotel. The sight of it reminded him more sharply of his hunger and during the next ten minutes the vague plans for his future took more definite shape in his brain.

His path brought him to a little gate that opened from the heath into the hotel garden and thence he passed to the front of the building where a phalanx of parked cars seemed to justify the prominently displayed sign of the Automobile Association. Undoubtedly this was the place. He read the name in broad golden letters above the door: "Amberley Down Golf Hotel." It was surprising and a little disturbing to see so many cars at a time that was not a holiday period, but, Hugo reflected, the more people there were about the less conspicuous he would be. Boldly mounting the steps he pushed open a glass door and entered the hall where he turned to a little window marked "office." A golden-haired girl in a black dress was seated behind the counter making entries in a book.

"Good afternoon," said Hugo pleasantly. "Has a Mr. Armitage arrived here today?"

"No one of that name has registered," the girl answered.

"He's my brother. I'm expecting him to come by car from London," Hugo explained glibly. "He's bringing my suitcase and golf clubs with him. Can you give us a couple of rooms?"

"Oh, yes. We aren't very busy at this time of year."

"Good. Leave it till he turns up. Meantime I suppose I can have some lunch?" Hugo glanced at a clock which showed that it was after two. "Afraid I'm a bit late."

"That's quite all right," the girl said amiably. "Dining-

room at the end of the corridor on the right-hand side."

Hugo thanked her and turned away with the reflection that the tangled web of deception was easily woven if one put one's mind to it unflinchingly. He was Mr. Armitage awaiting the advent of his brother from London. He passed a hand over his chin. Clearly Mr. Armitage's incipient beard would not bear the full light of day and the scrutiny of civilized society. He hung the offending hat and coat in a cloak-room along the passage, then stuffing George's sponge-bag in his pocket ascended the stairs in search of a bathroom.

SEVEN minutes later he was seated alone in the dining-room with a plate of excellent soup before him and an attentive elderly waiter at his elbow. Fish, veal-and-ham pie, biscuits and a well matured Stilton were helped on their way by a pint of draught beer. "Obtaining credit by false pretenses," he told himself. Well, the food tasted none the worse for that and an escaping prisoner couldn't afford to be too particular. Besides, he intended to pay for the meal. Sometime, when the hotel-keeper was wondering what had become of his elusive guest, a postal-order would arrive from Mr. Armitage that would more than cover Mr. Armitage's consumption of food and drink and would leave a satisfactory tip to the obliging waiter. The waiter, indeed, was a friend in need, conversational and informative without being too inquisitive and it was he who settled Hugo's doubts as to his next move.

"Not going to see the golf match, sir?" the waiter inquired.

"What golf match?" Hugo asked in turn.

"Of course, you wouldn't know as you've just arrived, though people have come in cars from all over," the waiter said. "They've been making some big improvements on Amberley Down. Links have been extended and I believe there's a new eighth, eleventh and twelfth hole, sir. This is the official opening and Summers, the local pro, is playing a thirty-six holes exhibition match against the famous Tom Rickard who laid out the course."

"I suppose that accounts for the number of cars about." Hugo dug into the Stilton. "It should make an interesting game."

"Very interesting, sir. They say Rickard's likely to win, being champion last year."

Hugo laid aside his napkin and pushed back his chair. In his mind's eye he could see the big locker-room at the clubhouse, as he had last seen it, with its rows of pegs many of them hung with old coats and caps and waterproofs and odds and ends of golfers' attire. He had contemplated a raid on the place in search of outer garments, but had hesitated in face of the probability of lurking members. The waiter had decided him. Everybody would be watching the game and the chances were that the clubhouse would be absolutely deserted.

"I might stroll over and have a look," he said casually. "What time does the afternoon round begin?"

"Two-fifteen, I believe, sir." The waiter looked at the dining-room clock. "Quarter to three now. You know how slow these games go when there's a big crowd. I expect you could pick them up about the fifth, sir."

Hugo rose. "Thanks, I'll have a shot at it."

"Quite worth while," the waiter assured him. "What is the number of your room, sir?"

"Blest if I know," Hugo answered. "They'll tell you at the office. Mr. Armitage."

"Thank you, sir."

Mr. Armitage swung out of the room and along the corridor with an air. For the last time he donned the dangerous hat and overcoat, waved a cheery hand to the damsel in the office, and received a pleasant smile, then passed to the front hall where a porter appeared to open the door for him.

"I'm just going over to have a squint at the famous golf match," Hugo told the man. "If a Mr. Armitage should arrive during my absence you might please tell him where I've gone."

"Very good, sir," said the porter.

Buses, chars-a-bancs and a great number of cars were parked in a field, while the members' parking ground behind the clubhouse was also packed to capacity. Hugo paid his shilling at the gate, received a little badge for his buttonhole, and threading his way through myriads of motors passed to the front of the clubhouse where a long verandah gave a fine view over the Amberley Down golf course with its magnificent fairways bordered by a wilderness of heath and bracken, its teasing bunkers and its tree-girted lake, the grave of countless balls. On the verandah he paused to admire the picture. A crowd that must have numbered many hundreds was streaming over the course from a point which he judged to be the fifth tee. There appeared to be no one within half a mile of him. He turned and stepped boldly into the clubhouse. As he had hoped, it was deserted; not a soul in the smoking-room, not even a servant in the dining-room.

He passed to the locker-room and seeking a peg in the darkest corner discarded George's hat and overcoat.

After careful scrutiny and the trying on of several articles Hugo finally selected a soiled but serviceable waterproof, the kind of thing in which one went fishing or tramping, and a veteran cap of a vague, greenish color which any country gentleman might wear with impunity. Thus clad, with only the foot of George's flannel trousers and George's shoes exposed to the public gaze, he left the clubhouse fairly confident that not ever a forewarned policeman would recognize him. He had even a mind to see something of the great game. He was fond of golf and he owed it to Mr. Armitage and to the Golf Hotel to follow the players as he had promised to do. He could not immediately walk back past the man at the gate and he determined either to slip away from the far end of the course, if it should prove convenient to do so, or to leave by the gate along with the crowd. Possibly he might beg a lift on one of the cars going toward London or he might proceed on foot in that direction and approach the city under cover of darkness. It seemed reasonable to assume that as the police had no idea where he had gone and that as he did not answer to the description that would be circulated it would be singularly unfortunate if he did not reach the haven of the metropolis in safety.

Going to the fifteenth hole he stood in the throng that encircled the green when a heavy hand descended suddenly upon his shoulder, and a voice asked—"Herrald, isn't it?"

His heart missed a beat. No use trying to make a bolt for it. If they had got him he would have to go quietly. But it was with a sickening sensation that he realized all he had gone through, so near the goal of safety, to have it suddenly end.

He turned to face the speaker. No mistaking the identity of the plainly dressed man standing there. A detective—and had he needed any further proof, he had only to look toward the entrance of the golf grounds and see two of the motorcycle squad who had miraculously managed to catch up with him. Hugo reflected on the efficient working of England's police system and smiled. "No need for a scene, is there?"

The crowd was still too intent to notice the drama occurring in their midst.

The big man with the stern face smiled back. "Not at all. Rather be quiet, you know. You'll not try another bolt, will you?"

Hugo shook his head. "No."

"Right." Arm in arm, they strolled toward the waiting policemen.

CHAPTER XIII

(*Extract from "The Evening Mercury"*)

ATTACK ON WARDER
DUMMY PLACED IN CELL BED

THE recent sensational escape from Bellinghurst Gaol was again described at Surrey Assizes today when Hugo Herrald, aged 43, pleaded guilty to a felonious assault on chief-assistant-warder Brown. It was stated on Herrald's behalf that he had suffered from a long series of indignities and petty cruelties at Brown's hands.

Addressing the prisoner Mr. Justice Tremlett said that it was fortunate for him that Brown had recovered from his injuries as otherwise he might have been arraigned on a much more serious charge. It was with difficulty that he refrained from imposing penal servitude, but in the whole circumstances the sentence would be one of two years' imprisonment.

It is understood that a recommendation has been made that the sentence should be served elsewhere than at Bellinghurst.

Criminal's Daring Ruse.

Mr. Ashton (prosecuting) said that owing to a defective lock. . . .

There's No Knowing

CHAPTER XIV

HUGO HERRALD took from his pocket the slip of paper which had been handed him by the tawdily dressed little man as he left prison and read it once again.—"Please call upon Mr. Theodore, 17 Derwent Court, Maida Vale, at 3 p. m. on Tuesday when you may learn something to your advantage. Do not fail."

He stood for a minute contemplating the dingy block of small flats that hemmed in the cul-de-sac known as Derwent Court and saw an analogy. Like him they were once smart and also respectable and homes of some culture and refinement. Now they were discreet and faintly disreputable. One could imagine all sorts of strange and doubtful persons lurking behind those walls of dirty, crumbling stucco. The hot sunshine of a brilliant day in early Summer beat upon the enclosed space, filling the court with a warm, stale odor of cooking and petrol fumes, and a piano poured forth a stream of well-executed jazz from one of the few open windows.

As he pulled the door-bell of Number 17 Hugo felt mildly excited. The old life was dead. On with the new! A stout breathless woman answered the summons.

"Is Mr. Theodore in?" Hugo inquired.

"He may be," she answered cautiously. "Have you an appointment?"

"My name is, or at least was, Herrald," said Hugo pleasantly. "I have an appointment with Mr. Theodore although I'm afraid I'm a little late—about two years late to be exact."

The woman stared at him doubtfully. "All right. Come in," she said.

CHAPTER XV

HESTHER BRENT examined as much of herself as she could see in the bath water and was satisfied with the result. It was a well made, well proportioned body which would have put scores of girls in their early twenties to shame, taller than the average and not too slim. She had always taken care of it, without being fastidious; her exercises and dietary were nicely balanced; she rested it whenever it was fatigued and protected it in a sensible way against such ravages as time and a prolonged struggle in the law courts had imposed upon it. Physically it made her a very charming and presentable widow.

A quarter of an hour later she was seated at her dressing-table a little perturbed by the discovery of a strand of gray hair and an extra wrinkle. Well, what could she expect? She was actually forty-two, she was a widow, she had a grown-up daughter, she had had a hard life and had come through a tiresome experience in the law courts. She laughed suddenly and made a charming grimace. Although she was a reasonably vain woman, Hesther Brent did not realize just how charming was the face reflected in her mirror. The brown eyes held more than a hint of mischief, the straight nose had a delicious tilt at the end, the teeth were pearly and regular and all her own, and, generally, it was a face full of expression and vivacity.

She was holding a *post-mortem* now. The subject, however, wasn't herself, but Simon Brent, her husband. She flattered herself that she could now remember Simon Brent without rancor, with forgiveness even, as a clumsy, rather boorish, overgrown boy, lacking tact and understanding through no fault of his own, who, because he had not married a meek and spineless woman, had proceeded right away to destroy such prospects of romance as an incompatible marriage might conceivably have afforded. Simon was her husband, therefore she owed him a duty; Simon was a man, therefore he was half asleep. If he was ill-tempered, ill-mannered, stupid, if he sometimes drank too much, he wasn't past reformation. With her characteristic tendency to exaggerate things, or rather to distort them a little, like most women, by dramatizing her life, Hesther had glowed faintly with the reformer's zeal. But Simon had obstinately refused to be reformed and when Phyllis was only eight years old the crisis came and they parted.

But if she could now remember Simon without any bitterness, Hesther would always think of him in terms of law and lawyers. She could still feel the horrible formal atmosphere of the lawyer's office where the separation agreement was drawn up and signed. She had to admit that Simon had been most considerate. She had been given the custody of Phyllis and a handsome allowance which had been increased with Simon's means in the years that followed, and during all that time he had never once troubled her, all communications passing through the solicitor's hands. Then, more than seven years ago, the steamship "Wallarroo" on a voyage between Australia and London had vanished with every soul on board. Simon Brent was one of the passengers. It was generally stated at the time that the ship had turned turtle, a theory supported by the type of wreckage that was found and by the reflections upon the vessel's stability that were made at the subsequent inquiry. Whatever the actual cause of the disaster, Simon Brent had completely disappeared and Hesther who was living quietly at Milchester for Phyllis's schooling found herself a focus of local gossip and involved in prolonged and mysterious legal processes, from which she had only today emerged finally triumphant. For Simon had to be presumed dead before his estate could be dealt with in accordance with the instructions to his trustees of whom Hesther was one, and a person might not be presumed to be dead until the lapse of seven years.

The last two years seemed to Hesther to have been spent entirely in the law courts, counsel's chambers and solicitors offices. At first the whole thing had been a sort of confused nightmare from which she had always expected to waken up, but latterly she had rather enjoyed the muddling business and had made great friends with Clitherhoe, K. C., her leading counsel. Simon, it seemed, had acquired interests in an Australian mine taken over by a London syndicate and the latter had strenuously resisted the claim of his trustees. But the judge had been very sweet to Hesther. She had no idea that a judge could be so human.

The legal battle had fought itself out; Clitherhoe, K. C., had striven wonderfully, the litigation in connection with the Australian property had been satisfactorily settled, a month ago Simon had been pronounced officially dead, and today the Court had made its final order, authorizing the distribution of the estate. She was now an independent and wealthy woman.

As she put unnecessary finishing touches to her exquisite complexion, Hesther sighed and then smiled. The sigh dismissed Simon, who had caused her more trouble over his death than he did in his life; the smile was one of contentment. Her thoughts turned pleasantly to the two men who had done so much for her. There was John, her co-trustee and oldest friend. Well, she would probably marry John, as he was certain to ask her. Then there was Basil, who was so handsome and charming and who had given her so much disinterested advice and help. Basil was much more clever than John, and seemed to know everything about lawyers and courts and business and investments. Of course he had no official position. That was probably why dear John was a little jealous of him. She was going to have them both down to stay at Fairlea for a few days after the trustees' meeting on Thursday. They would have a little celebration dinner or something. It seemed strange to celebrate Simon's demise; at least, it might have seemed strange to Simon, who never had any sense of humor; but it was, definitely, an occasion.

It was all so exhilarating and exciting to be free at last and mistress of her life and fortune. Tonight she and Phyllis had been asked to dine at Bishopsmead to meet Mr. Carter, the member for the constituency who was commencing his election campaign. It was expected that his party would be returned to power in which case he would be a Cabinet Minister. She had heard that Mrs. Carter was a beautiful woman. The county would be there. Coinciding as it did with the *finale* of the Court proceedings the invitation was a good omen. Hesther was especially glad for Phyllis's sake. The child had grown up very suddenly and deserved as good a chance as any other girl in the countryside.

HESTHER surveyed herself in the cheval glass. She was glad she had put on the black gown. It became her, made her look dignified and, besides, she owed it to Simon's memory to wear black. Now that she was a widow she would have to go into mourning for a short while. She pinned in her dress the little spray of pink roses which Phyllis had placed on her table. Dear child! She was just a little anxious about Phyllis.

Meantime Phyllis Brent was becoming a little anxious about her mother. Ten minutes ago Bassett had announced that the car hired from the "Crown and Anchor" at Chipping Eden was waiting. Phyllis had ordered it to come early in the hope that it would prevent her mother from being late, but now the clock struck the half-hour and they were due at Bishopsmead at a quarter to eight.

Putting her cloak about her slim shoulders, Phyllis ran to the foot of the stairs and called "Hurry up, Mother, we shall be dreadfully late."

"Coming, child," Hesther answered. "Is the car there?"

"Of course it is. Didn't Bassett tell you?"

"He may have. I've been day-dreaming." Hesther appeared at the top of the stairs and came slowly down, so as to look dignified. Yet, to anyone who did not know them she and Phyllis might have seemed sisters. "Do I look all right, dear?" she asked anxiously.

Phyllis caught her breath. "You look lovely."

It was only a few minutes' drive from Fairlea to Bishopsmead but Hesther and Phyllis were the last of the guests to arrive and Hesther, who knew how to make an effective entrance, enjoyed, notwithstanding her nervous excitement, the stir they evoked as they crossed the hall to greet Sir James and Lady Heath. The county was there in force, Mainwarings, Bulkley-Fawcetts, Graingers and others. They were introduced to a group that surrounded Lewis Carter who was preening himself like a love-stricken pigeon and uttering tremendous platitudes on the state of the country and the prospects of their election.

Phyllis thought Mrs. Carter the most beautiful woman, after her mother, whom she had ever seen, but decided that she was a bad and possibly a dangerous woman. The way Mrs. Carter spoke to Tony Heath, the caress in her voice, the meaning in her eyes, were positively sickening. "Baby-snatcher," she said to herself. Of course Tony was only a boy (he was twenty-one and just a year older than Phyllis) but surely he would have sense to see through a woman like that? She was conscious of a pang of jealousy and then of a distinct thrill of triumph as Tony disengaged himself from Mrs. Carter and turned to her.

"Hullo, Phyl," he said, seizing her hands, his handsome boyish face lighting up. "I say, you look great in that dress."

"Do I?" She blushed a little. "Congrats on your degree," she said hurriedly. "B. A. Cantab' sounds pretty learned, doesn't it?"

"Thanks Phyl. Now that the 'Varsity's behind me I feel heaps older. Man of the world and responsibility and all that sort of stuff. I mean to settle down to something immediately. Seriously."

"There's no hurry, Tony."

"That's what the old man says. He wants me to help Carter at the election. I don't mind driving the car and that sort of thing, but I can't be expected to *speak* for Carter. Between you and me he's a damned old humbug. I say, what do you think of Mrs. Carter?"

Phyllis bit her lip. "She's beautiful. What do you think of her, Tony?"

"She's a good-looker certainly." Tony's tone was too elaborately casual. "And she's rather interesting. Obviously she's seen a lot."

Dinner was announced and Phyllis was slightly mortified to find that Tony was seated beside Mrs. Carter, while she was at the other end of the table next to a young Bulkley-Fawcett with devastatingly perfect manners, who asked her what pack she hunted with in the winter time and seemed to be in the Guards.

AFTER dinner troops of young people arrived, and a dance band from London began to play in the music room. Phyllis loved dancing and was an excellent performer, but tonight she was unable to enjoy it as much as usual, for she found herself watching Tony who had been annexed by Mrs. Carter. Of course, it was only proper that he should pay some attention to one of his mother's principal guests and she had no right to interfere with him and no interest to do so beyond the fact that she and Tony were old friends and she didn't want him to make a fool of himself. She had to confess that she knew nothing against Mrs. Carter, but one had to rely on one's instincts. Her instinct told her that the woman was a vamp, a baby-snatcher, and perhaps something worse and Tony ought to be warned against her, as delicately as possible, before he got into trouble. Tony was very sensible in many ways —she had often asked his advice just as her mother consulted Uncle John Bellamy,—but he couldn't be expected to see a woman like Mrs. Carter in her true colors. She decided to approach the matter under cover of asking his advice again.

It was not until the sixth dance that Tony came to claim her. They floated round the room without saying a word.

"It's hot in here. Let's go out on to the terrace," Tony suggested, when the dance came to an end.

But at that moment Tony's mother came hurrying across the floor. "I want you to come at once and take Lady Grainger in to supper, Tony," she said. "Your father says she has great influence in the constituency and must be attended to for Mr. Carter's sake."

"Oh damn Mr. Carter," Tony cried. "Phyl and I—"

"You can talk to Phyllis later. I've got a very nice partner for her."

"All right, I'll come in a moment," Tony promised. He turned to Phyllis and said in a low voice. "I want to have a talk with you, Phyl. A really long jaw. I—I've something frightfully important to say to you. What about golf, Thursday afternoon?"

"That will suit me," Phyllis told him.

"Right. I'll come across the park for you. Where is the dear dowager, Mother?"

CHAPTER XVI

TONY HEATH took the short cut across the Bishopsmead park, climbed the fence into Mrs. Brent's garden, entered the lounge by the French window, as was his habit, and deposited his golf clubs on a chair. Then he whistled for Bassett and dispatched the old servant to inform Miss Brent that Mr. Heath awaited her.

Phyllis came down the stairs, looking extraordinarily attractive in a white jumper suit. "Hullo, Tony, sorry to keep you waiting," she cried gaily. She turned to Bassett. "Has Mr. Ramsay phoned to say when he's arriving, Bassett?"

"Not yet, Miss."

"Good lord! Is Basil Ramsay coming?" Tony asked as Bassett retired.

"Yes. Mother asked him to come and stay for a bit. Any objections?" Phyllis' tone was curt.

"I—oh no, of course not."

"Then you don't require to look as if you had."

Tony flushed. "Well, all I know is you've not been nearly the same since he got in the way of coming here," he burst out.

"Don't be a mutt, Tony. He comes here because—Mother likes him. Besides, he's such a help to her. She thinks he has a far better business head than Uncle Bellamy."

"*Uncle* Bellamy?"

"You know I always call him that." She pushed Tony's clubs off the chair and sat down. "Smoke a cigarette and put on your thinking cap," she commanded. "I'm going to ask your advice, Tony. I'm rather worried."

Tony lit a cigarette. "Spit it out," he said.

"It's about Mother," she began. "You see, now that Father's legally dead as well as really dead, she may want to marry again."

"I shouldn't wonder! By the way, what was your father like?"

"Father? I thought you'd seen his photograph." Phyllis rose and went over to a side table. "Why, that's funny!" she exclaimed. "It used to stand here and now it's disappeared."

"Gosh! You mean to say his photograph has disappeared too?"

"Mother must have taken it. I heard her say she meant to have it enlarged and to hang it over the fireplace so that everybody would see it." She returned to her seat. "You put me off, Tony. About Mother. It's been bad enough as it is with her crowd of admirers—from the colonel to the vicar—fluttering around."

"I can't imagine the colonel fluttering."

"But when they know that she's so handsomely left, there may be fortune hunters. She's so ridiculously young for her years. I simply hate to think of her being taken in. But I expect if she marries at all, she'll want to marry Uncle Bellamy."

"Honest John!"

"Yes. And the question is, do you think I should let her?"

He sat down on the arm of her chair and blew a few speculative smoke-rings toward the ceiling. "Well, he seems a decent old cuss, and not exactly what you'd call a crock," he said judicially. "Wealthy himself, and no apparent vices. I think it would be very suitable."

"Of course *he* adores *her*, if that means anything now-a-days," she went on. "He'll eat out of her hand, and is really rather a dear. But he's years older."

"How old?"

"He must be fifty."

He nodded sagely. "Pretty senile."

"Besides, he's one of Father's trustees," she pointed out.

His manner grew more judicial. "I don't see anything wrong in marrying a trustee. In a way, it keeps things in the family."

"It's jolly decent of you to advise me like this, Tony."

"Oh, not at all! Your mother's a charming widow and charming widows ought to marry. It saves a lot of trouble. My only difficulty is, that if she re-marries, you may feel it—well, a little awkward."

"Awkward!" She raised a puzzled face to his.

"Naturally you will not wish to intrude upon love's young dream," he explained, letting his arm slip across her shoulders. "To put it frankly, you will be surplus in the new home. In other words, you may be more than he bargained for."

"I expect I'll be that!" she laughed.

"You might, in fact, be forced to marry yourself."

She started, and her brown eyes fell before the intensity of his blue ones. "I—I might," she admitted.

"Which raises an interesting and important question. Phyl, I want——"

Suddenly the telephone began to ring. She jumped up and went to the instrument which stood on Hesther's writing table.

"Hello!" she called. "Yes, it is—Oh, of course not! . . . Splendid. . . . Yes, rather. . . . I'll be here." She replaced the receiver and returned to the chair beside which Tony was now standing, looking darkly suspicious.

"As I was saying——" he began.

"That's Basil Ramsay," she cried excitedly. "He's on his way."

He seized his clubs. "Then it's time we were getting along. Where are your clubs?"

Again she avoided his gaze. "I'm sorry, I can't golf this afternoon, Tony."

"But we arranged it!"

"I know. But you can't have a guest arriving and no one to receive him. Mother would never forgive me."

"*He* won't worry. If I know anything of Uncle Ramsay he'll make himself at home whether there's any one here or not."

"Why do you call him *Uncle* Ramsay?"

"Well, he's old enough, isn't he?"

She bit her lips to control her rising anger. "He isn't a silly boy, of course."

"Thanks." His temper mounted with hers. "You didn't think me that a little while ago, when you talked to me about your mother. There may be just as much need to *warn* you."

"Oh, indeed? Against whom?"

"Ramsay." Suddenly he seized her wrist. "Look here, Phyl, we've been good pals for years and I'm not going to have you chucking yourself away on a fellow like that."

"Well, you *have* some nerve—to dictate to *me!*" She jerked herself free.

"I'm not dictating. Why, half the fellows at the club look upon him as a rank outsider. What do you know about him anyhow?"

He could not have said anything more indiscreet. Her smouldering anger flamed up instantly. "A jolly sight more than you seem to do," she cried. "When he came to this mouldy old place for a rest, *he* soon knew what to expect. I don't need to go to your beastly club to know how he's regarded. Had he been Army it would have been different. But because he's in business and better off than most of you, he's treated by some of the men just as some of the women have tried to treat Mother and me. This is the most snobbish hole in England! Fortunately he met those who *could* understand and sympathize."

"So that's the bond of sympathy?" he said bitterly.

"YES! And what makes it worse in you, there's not only snobbery but jealousy! Why don't you take Mrs. Carter out to golf if you want some one to play with?

"Oh Phyl!" He took a step toward her, then paused irresolutely. She turned away to hide the tears that filled her eyes.

"Don't!" she choked. "I—I thought you were different, and I'm so disappointed—I never want to speak to you again."

He shouldered his clubs. "Then you're not coming to golf?" he asked quietly.

"No."

He had an impulse to throw down his clubs, seize her in his arms, and kiss her, but he had also a contradictory impulse to slap her. While he stood hesitating between the two the opportunity to perform either operation was frustrated by the entrance of Hesther with John Bellamy. Hesther as usual looked charming, while Bellamy looked exactly what he was, a thoroughly sound Englishman something over fifty and obviously deserving of the title "Honest John" which Tony had bestowed upon him.

"Thank heaven, home at last," Hesther exclaimed. She looked at the young people and her eyebrows lifted slightly. "Ring for tea, Phyllis."

"I was just going, Mrs. Brent," said Tony, gulping.

"You must have some tea first."

"No thank you! I'm off to play a singleton."

"You mean alone? But isn't that rather a nuisance. I mean for the people who are coming up behind?"

"P'raps. But I'd sooner be a nuisance on a golf course than a nuisance here." And with these words Tony turned with military precision and marched through the window and across the garden.

Shortly after five Basil Ramsay arrived.

CHAPTER XVII

JOHN BELLAMY strolled through the garden, his mind occupied with pleasant thoughts of the future, and entered the lounge by the French window just as Ramsay and Phyllis returned from a drive. The girl was flushed and excited and looked extraordinarily pretty, almost as pretty, John thought, as her mother.

"Where's Mother?" Phyllis asked.

"Gone up to change," he told her. "When's dinner?"

"Seven-thirty."

Bellamy looked at his watch. "Then I must go up too. Had a good run, my dear?"

"Lovely." She glanced at Basil who was looking very satisfied with himself. "We'd something to tell Mother. Hadn't we, Basil?"

"Something of the utmost importance," Basil agreed.

"Shall we tell Uncle John now?"

"Why not?"

Phyllis turned to Bellamy. "Basil and I are engaged to be married." Now "kiss me and say you're glad." And she flung her arms about his neck.

John was completely taken aback. He ought to have expected this from all he had seen of the two together, but . . . "Of course—yes," he mumbled kissing Phyllis. "Good Lord!" he added as she released him.

"Don't look so bewildered," the girl cried.

"My dear, of course I'm delighted—I wish you every joy—" he said, recovering himself. He shook hands with Ramsay. "Heartiest congratulations. You're a lucky fellow." After all, Ramsay was good-looking, wealthy and very presentable.

"Should I run up and tell Mother now, or would you rather wait and break the news together Basil?" asked Phyllis.

"I feel we ought to announce it together," Basil answered. "I feel we ought to employ the town crier to march through the whole countryside and shout the glorious news, and we can follow behind ringing his bell." He slipped his arm about her waist and John was forced to admit to himself that they made a very handsome couple.

"It'll be enough if Uncle Bellamy drinks our healths and makes a little speech at dinner," Phyllis laughed. "I wonder if Bassett has anything decent in the cellar?"

As if to answer her query Bassett himself appeared from the front hall, but it was a strange Bassett such as Phyllis had never seen before. The old man's face was white and drawn, his knees trembled so that he could scarcely stand and his hands were shaking.

"Beg pardon, sir," he quavered, addressing himself to Bellamy, "but could I speak to you a moment?"

"What's wrong, Bassett?" asked Phyllis. "You look as though you'd seen a ghost."

The old man gulped. "I have, Miss Phyllis—indeed I have." He paused a moment in an attempt to control his agitation and then went on, addressing Bellamy. "He came to the door, sir—just now. He was poorly dressed. I thought he was begging. 'Don't you know me, Bassett?' he says. Then I recognized him. It was the master."

Bellamy started forward. "The master! What are you talking about?"

"It was Mr. Brent, sir. Miss Phyllis's father."

"My father!" Phyllis grew white as the suit she was wearing. "Have you lost your senses, Bassett?"

Bassett shook his head and gulped again. "He's in the hall, miss, waiting to know if the mistress or you will see him."

"There must be some mistake," Basil put in.

"There's no mistake," said a voice at the door. They all turned to face the man who had entered the room, moving slowly and a little painfully, and who now paused, glancing from one to another of them. He was a man of about

There's No Knowing

Bellamy's age, but taller and broader, with features that were handsome, despite the fact that his face was haggard and emaciated and darkened by a two days' beard. His stooped shoulders, sunken chest and feverish eyes suggested one who had suffered a long and serious illness. He was poorly clad in threadbare clothes that looked as if they had been borrowed and he carried a cheap cap in his hand.

There was a sudden dead silence that seemed to embrace the house and the garden about it. "Am I intruding?" the stranger asked at last. He spoke with a slight but perceptible American accent.

"Father!" Phyllis cried. She stared at him with wide eyes, but made no move.

Bellamy took a step forward. "My god! *You*, Simon?" he exclaimed.

SIMON Brent smiled a little sardonically. "I'm sorry," he apologized. "I ought to have sent word of some kind. But I didn't mean to disturb you—and I wouldn't —if only I hadn't been—well—as you see me."

"But we—we thought you were dead," Bellamy said.

"I know. You thought I went down with the Wallarroo." He came toward Phyllis. "So this is my little girl! I'd have known you, of course, but it's a bit of a shock to see you a young woman." He passed his hand in a dazed fashion over his brow. "One forgets how time—My God! it's over eight years since I saw you last."

"It's nearer ten since last *we* met, Simon," Bellamy said, gently.

Simon turned to look at him. "You haven't altered much, John. Not like me. But then, you haven't gone through what I've gone through."

Phyllis suddenly awoke to the fact that her father had come home ill and destitute, obviously exhausted *and* possibly starving. She took command of the situation, led him gently to the sofa where she made him sit down with cushions propping his back and sent the dithering Bassett for whisky and soda.

"There. You're tired and ill. Just a minute," she ordered.

Simon accepted her ministrations with a curious expression, half tender, half mocking, on his face. "Thank you, my child," he said. His eyes turned to Basil whom he seemed to notice for the first time. "But who is this? I—I don't think I remember him."

"Oh, this is Basil Ramsay. We're engaged to be married," Phyllis replied.

Simon half rose from his seat, plainly startled. "Engaged!" he echoed, then sank back on the cushions. "Forgive me—it was a shock to think of my little girl marrying. I'm pleased to meet you, sir." He turned to Bellamy. "I don't mean to stay long. I'll just explain and then I'll go."

"I'll take a turn in the garden," Basil suggested awkwardly.

"There's no need, Mr. — I'm afraid I didn't catch your name."

"Ramsay—Basil Ramsay."

"He's often heard us speak of you," Phyllis explained.

"Has he? Then he may be all the more interested in my story." Simon paused breathlessly, then speaking slowly and with a painful emphasis as though the effort were almost beyond his powers he told his tale. "As you know, I sailed from Australia on the 'Wallarroo.' We were out of our course, somewhere off the African coast, when the thing happened. The ship simply heeled over and went down—turned turtle they call it. Most of the passengers were in bed. I was on deck, not being able to sleep. I felt myself sucked down into the darkness. God! I can feel that black choking whirlpool yet! I've no recollection of anything more, until I found myself in a tumbling waste of water, clinging to a wooden seat—a rustic affair, that for sentimental reasons one of the passengers was bringing home, and which had been brought up on deck. For hours, maybe, I clung to it. And when dawn broke, I found myself so close inshore that I let go and swam for it. I managed to crawl ashore, and then for the second time remembered nothing more." He broke off in a fit of coughing and sipped the drink that Bassett had thrust into his hand. "When I came to myself I was being carried in a litter by black men through the bush. The leader was a tall old fellow with white hair." He put his hand wearily to his head. "But I'm afraid I must give you the details later. At present it's enough to tell you that I was lost in Africa for years. Sounds like a fairy tale, doesn't it, my dear? I wish it had been! The old fellow with the white hair was the chief medicine man of the tribe. They were called the M'mtamba. He had quarreled with a rival over some religious matter, and not only scored over him, but gained the confidence of the tribe by producing me as a messenger from the gods. I don't know how long I was kept captive by these people. It must have been years. But the old fellow made me clearly understand that my life as well as his power depended on just how long I continued to play the part and to behave according to his instructions."

"But didn't you think of escaping?" Bellamy asked as Simon paused to drink.

"Constantly, but I assure you that's not—not at all easy when you're treated and watched over as a kind of god. Besides I hadn't the least idea of where I was, and knew nothing of the country around. Then one day a neighboring tribe came along on a raiding expedition. They left the village a smoking shambles, and carried off the women, the old priest and myself. My new captivity was very different from the old. I was no longer a god, or, at best, a dishonored one. I lived through months of unspeakable horror, tied to a stake by an iron chain. But I noticed one link was badly rusted. Every day I spat upon it so that the rust ate gradually deeper, until at last one night the worn link snapped and I made my escape. I was picked up half crazed by some Belgian prospectors from the Congo. They took me to a Belgium station where I lay ill for weeks. I worked my passage to Antwerp. Then I came home to find everything sold up, and that I was a dead man. That's all."

Ramsay lit a cigarette and exhaled a cloud of smoke. "Your story's certainly a most extraordinary one, Mr. Brent," he said, making no attempt to hide the sarcasm in his tones.

"It's—it's almost incredible," Bellamy observed.

"You can believe it or not as you choose," Simon said sulkily. "I don't know that it's of any consequence. I should never have come here to trouble you at all if there had been any other way out."

Bellamy looked at him with compunction. It was the very deuce Simon turning up like this, but the man was obviously down and out.

"You wish to see Hesther?" he asked.

"Not if that can be avoided. It would only cause her unnecessary pain—and she's had quite enough of that in the past. My reason for coming is simply to identify myself. I find I can do nothing without that. I consulted some lawyers in London. I'd no money and only the clothes I stood in. They wouldn't believe me. They thought I was mad, or an impostor. They told me that before I could bring an action to recover my money I'd have to find security for costs. There was nothing for it but to come." Simon smiled pathetically. "It's not any pleasanter you know, to go under in England, than in the wilds of Africa."

"What do you want?" Bellamy asked. He strove to make his voice as matter-of-fact as possible. The only way was to treat the thing on a business footing.

"ONLY enough to live on," Simon answered. "I know that when I was alive I could afford as much."

"Your estate has been proved at much more—not to speak of the £20,000 from your Australian interests."

"Phew! As much as that! I am glad for Hesther's sake. Well, we'll discuss that later, after you've talked things over amongst you. I'll go now. I'm afraid this has been rather a painful interview for us all." Simon rose shakily and turned toward the door.

"Father, you mustn't go like that," Phyllis cried.

"He's quite right—undoubtedly, Phyllis," Bellamy intervened. "It would do your mother no good to see him. The shock—"

"She's got to know some time."

"But isn't it better to give him time to substantiate his story?" Basil suggested.

The girl turned on him angrily. "I believe him!"

"Still, your mother will have to be convinced also," said Bellamy. "Good heavens, I think I can hear her coming! What's to be done?"

Simon Brent moved toward the door, but Phyllis clutched his arm and pushed him gently into the recess by the window. "Don't go—I'll stick by you," she whispered.

Hesther entered the room unsuspectingly. She was dressed in a black semi-evening frock charmingly picked out with white lace at neck and wrists.

"Good gracious, child. Why haven't you gone to dress?" she asked. "It's almost dinner time. And don't wear anything bright. Remember we ought to be in mourning now."

"There's no need, Mother," Phyllis said quietly.

"Why, what's the matter?" Hesther glanced at Ramsay

and Bellamy and her hand went to her heart.

"Have courage, Hesther," John said gently. "We've had sudden and unexpected news."

"Father's not dead," said Phyllis. "He's—he's come home. Look, Mother!"

She beckoned to her father who came slowly and heavily from the recess and stopped with bowed head. Hesther turned deathly pale. For a moment, she stared at him with wide, terror-stricken eyes. "Simon!" she gasped, then suddenly crumpled and fell in a dead faint.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE disastrous return of Simon Brent created the most profound disturbance in the peaceful atmosphere of Fairlea and it was fortunate that Bassett's niece, the only other servant, was a woman who could be persuaded if not trusted to hold her tongue. Simon himself put up at the Crown and Anchor at Chipping Eden under the name of Henderson. With the money Bellamy advanced to him he went to London and purchased a wardrobe in keeping with his position, and after a couple of days' rest he seemed a different creature, well dressed, well groomed, looking years younger, and rather distinguished with his tall figure and handsome face beneath a curling mass of iron-gray hair. Hesther had been carried to bed where she remained all the next day, refusing to see anyone or to discuss the question of her husband's resurrection, but on the following day she came downstairs, a little pale, but apparently in her usual good spirits. Simon turned up for lunch and it was tacitly understood that until matters were settled he should come and go as he wished. He took advantage of this by spending a good part of his time at Fairlea, but while he made himself entirely at home in this respect, his manners were so charming that it was quite impossible to resent his presence. There was nothing of the old overbearing Simon about him, no suggestion that he was the master of the house and entitled to make demands upon his wife and daughter. His attitude was rather that of a welcome guest who knew exactly how far he could presume on his hostess's hospitality. It was further tacitly agreed that he and Hesther should not at present be left alone together. It would be so awkward for both of them. This did not apply to Phyllis, of course, and she and Simon spent a considerable time in each other's company and became much attached to each other.

But if matters thus temporarily adjusted themselves to present a comparatively unruffled surface, there were strong undercurrents of doubts, hopes, fears, perplexities and misunderstandings. Hesther was curiously excited and wayward and seemed unable to make up her mind. Phyllis became a staunch ally of her father and refused to listen to a word against him. Basil was inclined to be suspicious. As for poor John Bellamy, the world lay shattered about his feet and the more he felt inclined to resent Simon's return to life the more honestly he strove to do his duty. He went to London and explained the situation to the solicitors of the trust, obtained a statement of the accounts, discussed them with Simon and then made a tentative offer. He found Simon very amenable. The man was certainly not out to make trouble. All he wanted was a reasonable settlement.

Basil Ramsay was also active. Simon had returned on Thursday and Basil went to London on Friday returning on Monday. At first he had refused to swallow Simon's story and was determined to test it. He had made a number of inquiries, which included shipping offices and the Belgian Consulate, and every one of these had turned out satisfactorily. He had even got in touch with an explorer who knew the part of Africa where Simon had stated he was held captive. The explorer had written him a letter confirming the name of the tribe that had captured Brent and confirming a number of details about their customs.

"Seems pretty conclusive," Bellamy remarked, after reading the letter.

"Absolutely," Ramsay agreed. "I confess to being rather uncomfortable about it. I feel I ought to apologize to Mr. Brent."

"My dear fellow, there's no need," Bellamy said heartily. "Personally I'm much obliged for your disinterested trouble in the matter. I've been busy myself with the solicitors. The trustees are offering to make Brent an immediate payment of twenty thousand."

Ramsay whistled. "I call that a damned generous settlement."

"After all, it's his own money."

"Oh, I quite appreciate that. But it saves him no end of costs in the law courts—in fact all the trouble and expense of coming to life again."

"He'll get another ten thousand in about a year's time when we can realize some of the other securities," Bellamy pursued. "The effect will be to let him have half his estate back—exclusive of the original settlement to Phyllis in the event of her marriage. Of course I've got to go into the matter finally with both Hesther and Simon, but I think they'll agree. Simon's own idea is to go away and live somewhere apart just as before, except that this time Hesther and Phyllis will have complete control of their own shares."

But the idea of such a settlement did not commend itself to Phyllis. Simon had not come over to lunch that day and the atmosphere was curiously strained. Bellamy happened to mention the inquiries that Basil had been making.

"If you ask me, you've all been perfectly beastly to Father," Phyllis cried. "I can't imagine one of you suffering as he has."

"We're only anxious to do what's right," John observed.

"Right! You'd think he was an outcast!"

"My dear!" Bellamy protested. "The whole situation is full of difficulties, but your father has agreed to a settlement that will go a long way to remove them. His own wish is to retire to another part of the country under a new deed of separation. Of course you will be able to visit him from time to time as before."

"I wasn't thinking of myself," Phyllis observed tartly. "I know he feels he's not wanted, and that we had cut him out of our lives just as—just as a surgeon would cut out some nasty growth."

"I assure you I never regarded your father as a nasty growth," said Hesther mildly.

"It's no laughing matter, Mother!"

"I agree. I never regarded him as that either."

"You'll admit he's much improved."

"Immensely," Hesther agreed.

"Then I think it's a beastly shame his having to live at the inn like a commercial traveler." Phyllis declared.

Hesther helped herself to an apple and bit it with strong white teeth. "What do you suggest I ought to do?" she inquired.

"Ask him to come and stay here."

"What!" Bellamy exclaimed.

PHYLLIS softened. "I know it's been a frightful knock-out for you, Uncle John, but you can see for yourself how well they've been getting on. Besides, you owe him a duty, Mother."

"Within limits, my dear," Hesther said. "He preferred to live separate in the past, and I don't see what difference it makes that he has died and has been resurrected in the interval."

"I think it's hateful of you to talk like that!"

"Besides, we've no room." Hesther pointed out. "With John and Basil in the house, where would he sleep?"

"With you, of course."

"Oh, my child!" Hesther at least pretended to be shocked.

"He's your husband, isn't he?" Phyllis persisted.

"As I said before—within limits."

"Oh, there's no use arguing! But as I said before—it's a damned shame!" And pushing aside her plate Phyllis rose and flung out of the room. With a muttered excuse Basil followed her.

John was exceedingly perturbed. The whole house was at sixes and sevens. The sooner Simon was out of the way the better. "My dear, this is all very distressing for you," he said.

Suddenly Hesther put down her unfinished apple and began to cry, dabbing her eyes with her handkerchief. "I'm sure I don't know what's happened," she moaned. "Even yet I don't seem able to adjust myself. We'd become so much accustomed—and we were so happy."

John patted her shoulder and murmured comforting words; but it occurred to him that her tears were due to excitement rather than to sorrow. Presently she looked up smiling through her tears. "Dear John!" she murmured. "You're so good to me."

"Hesther, I want you to forget what I said to you the day he came back," he said earnestly.

"You mean your proposal?"

"It sounds so disloyal now to both of you." His honest face was flushed.

"Things can never be the same as before, can they?"

"We must try to make them seem so. We must try to forget."

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"It's expecting a great deal of any woman, John."

He cleared his throat and plunged. "There's only one thing I wanted to ask you before we leave the subject forever. Hesther, *would* you have married me?"

"Yes, John, I think I would."

He rose and began filling his pipe with fumbling fingers. "I'm glad to know that." After a pause he went on briskly. "There's one comfort, Simon seems quite prepared to depart in peace."

"With twenty thousand pounds in his pocket, and more to follow."

"You can't prevent him taking his own money."

She considered for a moment. "No, but I might ask him to take me with it."

"What!"

"It's rather a large sum for anybody to lose."

He stared at her aghast. "Good heavens, Hesther! You'd never dream of going back to live with him?"

"Phyllis thinks it's my duty."

SHE laughed suddenly. "Dear John!" she murmured, and patted his cheek. Then she tripped lightly upstairs humming a little dance tune.

When Simon Brent arrived an hour later Bellamy was still absent, Phyllis and Basil were away motoring, and Bassett informed him that Mrs. Brent was lying down but would see him presently. He took a camp chair into the garden and stretched himself on it with a newspaper and one of Bellamy's cigars. The sky was cloudless and the June sunshine drenched the flower-beds where the bees were beginning their summer search. It was very peaceful here. It was an ideal afternoon to sun-bathe, or to sleep. He tilted his hat over his eyes and lay still.

Bassett thought that his master had fallen asleep, but if he had been so inquisitive as to peep beneath the brim of Simon's hat he would have seen a pair of wide open and very alert gray eyes and a brow furrowed with concentrated thought. Tony Heath, climbing over the garden fence, spotted the stranger on the lawn, wondered idly who he might be, and was about to slip past him when Simon sat up suddenly.

"Oh—sorry if I disturbed you," Tony apologized.

Simon pushed his hat back and looked at the boy critically. "I guess you're Tony Heath," he said. "I've heard my—Phyllis speak of you."

"Really? Are you one of the house party?"

"I'm not actually staying here. But—I'm an old friend of Mrs. Brent."

Tony shook hands. "Jolly pleased to meet you," he avowed. "I think you said—it was Phyllis who told you about me?"

"It was, and she told me quite a lot," Simon confessed.

Tony squatted on the lawn. "Nothing very bad, I hope?" he ventured rather self-consciously.

"On the contrary, she seemed to think a very great deal of you."

"I think she's absolutely *it*. I just looked over to congratulate her on the engagement. Ramsay's a lucky devil."

"I agree. But how did you know of the engagement?"

"Oh, it's all over the place. Ramsay's been talking about it at the golf club. Have you known Phyllis long, sir?"

Simon started. "Well, I've—I've known her since she was a very small child," he answered.

"Oh! Then you'd know her father?"

"Yes, I happened to know him too."

Tony glanced at the big man beside him. He rather liked the look of him—the kind of person, he thought, that one might confide in. "Did you cotton on to him?" he asked. "I mean—Phyl sticks up for him, of course, because that's just like her. She's such a—such a gentleman herself. But I think he must have been a bit of a rotter."

Simon nodded gravely. "He certainly was not all he should have been."

"Not to Mrs. Brent anyhow. It's a jolly good thing for her he's gone aloft."

"I'm glad you take so favorable a view of his whereabouts," Simon observed laughing. "But as you say, it must have been a relief."

Tony lit a cigarette and pulled up his nicely creased flannel trousers at the knees. Having ventured so far there was nothing amiss in going farther. "And being an old friend, I suppose you hope, like everybody, she'll have better luck next time?"

"You think she may marry again?" Simon asked, sitting up.

"Rather! By the way, I expect you've met Mr. Bellamy? Well, I'm backing Honest John against the field. That's what I call him—he's such a decent old boy. I've an idea she should have married him at first."

"Perhaps you're right," said Simon and the expression on his face was so queer that the boy, thinking he had perhaps put his foot in it somehow, rose hastily. "I really came over to see Phyllis," he said.

Simon looked at him quizzically. "She's gone out motoring with—with her fiancé, I understand."

"Oh, that's all right. I'll look in later. I want to wish her the best and also to apologize."

"Apologize?"

"Yes. I'm afraid I acted rather the cad. You see—well, I thought Ramsay a bit too old for her, and I—told her so."

"Well, I've met Mr. Ramsay and, between you and me, I can't say I approve myself of a man linking up with a girl so much younger," Simon observed frankly. "Besides, she's too young to marry yet." The gray eyes twinkled. "Now, if she'd been older, and it had been someone—well, of your own age, I reckon it would have been more like the thing."

"Funny you should say that!" Tony exclaimed. "Because I don't mind telling you Phyl and I have been the greatest of pals since she came to live here, and I—I thought that some day perhaps——. But there's no use thinking that now. And I'm not grousing. I only want her to be happy and she deserves to be."

"So do I," the other agreed fervently. "I haven't seen Phyllis or her mother—for some time, of course. I've been too busy rubber planting out East. Only just returned to England. They strike me as being very happy here in the country."

Tony was impressed. It occurred to him that if anything should happen between Phyllis and Ramsay, if, for example, she should discover what an outsider the fellow really was, this old friend of the family would be a useful ally. It also occurred to him that he didn't know the stranger's name. He elicited the fact that he was a Mr. Henderson, that he was staying at the Crown and Anchor and that he would be very glad if Tony would give him a game of golf. Promising to look Mr. Henderson up at the inn he was just about to go when Hesther hailed him. She crossed the lawn carrying a large, important-looking envelope. Mr. Henderson rose at once and sweeping off his hat made her an elaborate bow, a custom, Tony reflected, that doubtless obtained in rubber plantations where white women were scarce. Hesther greeted them with a smile. She looked an absolute peach, thought Tony, just what Phyllis would look in another twenty years, if that blackguard Ramsay didn't ruin her life. To judge by Mr. Henderson's expression he thought her a peach too.

"I was just going, Mrs. Brent," Tony said after a minute.

"YOU always seem to be just going," Hesther observed. "The last time you 'just went' you were being a nuisance or something. I hope you're all right today?"

"I came over to see Phyl but she's out. However, I was awfully glad to meet Mr. Henderson."

"Henderson!" exclaimed Hesther.

"Yes. The pleasure, I may say, is mutual," Simon put in hurriedly. "We're going to have a game of golf together."

"I'm hoping to slip it across him," said Tony. "I suppose on eastern golf courses they drive off cocoanut mats or something."

Tony swung across the lawn, leaped over a cucumber frame, vaulted the fence and disappeared amongst the trees in the park.

Hesther watched him till he was out of sight, then sat down in the chair Simon had vacated.

"So you told him your name was Henderson?" she said. "I admire your discretion, Simon."

"Surely you didn't want me to publish my return to the world?" Simon asked. He threw himself on the grass at her feet. "Already the village tongues are beginning to wag. Who is the quiet unassuming gentleman at the Crown and Anchor who is daily dragging the anchor to Mrs. Brent's?"

Hesther nodded. "You're very wise, but it's a pity to deceive such a nice boy as Tony Heath. He and Phyllis have been very good friends and he knows all about you. At one time I thought they would make a match of it—before Basil intervened—and I'm not sure that Phyllis is happy in her mind. Just before she got engaged she had a quarrel with Tony and although she hasn't said much, I suspect it was really over Mrs. Carter."

"Mrs. Carter?"

"I keep forgetting you've just emerged from darkest Africa, Simon. But surely you know there's a general election on? This is Lewis Carter's constituency, and he and his wife are stopping with Sir James Heath, who's the local

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chairman of the party, or something. Mrs. Carter's a beautiful and I should say a dangerous woman, especially for a susceptible boy like Tony. He's been driving her about all over the constituency and the gossips say she's got her claws in him." Hesther sighed. "It's very unfortunate, because if Tony feels Phyl's engagement as much as I imagine he's just the sort of boy to be caught on the rebound and mixed up with a woman like Mrs. Carter."

Simon sat up nursing his knees and staring across the garden at the hillside. "Well, you can hardly hold yourself responsible for Tony's affairs," he commented.

"I know, but I'm fond of the boy, and his mother doesn't look after him properly. I wish Mrs. Carter had stayed in London. She doesn't help her husband anyway. I wish he would send her back there," Hesther declared vindictively. "However, that doesn't concern us just now. We've got to discuss your affairs, not Tony's. Are you listening, Simon?"

Simon started and withdrew his gaze from the distance. "I—beg your pardon," he mumbled. "I fear I was daydreaming."

"You'll have plenty of time for that later," she said severely. "John has got all the documents from the lawyers. Here they are." She handed over the envelope. "I've gone over them; they provide for a new deed of separation with an immediate payment to you of so much and a further sum within a year. John will go over them with you before you sign anything—that is, if you want to sign. You've got to decide what you're going to do, because the situation plainly can't go on."

"I suppose not," he said, balancing the long envelope in his palm. "It's a pity. I'm rather enjoying it."

"SIMON! I really believe you've developed a sense of humor. It wasn't always your strong point, you know."

"Perhaps not. But if I hadn't developed a sense of humor I shouldn't have retained my sanity today. It was a necessity among savages. It's even more so at home."

"Of course we think it only right to remind you that if you cared to establish your identity, you could recover the whole of your estate, and give Phyllis and me an allowance as before," she pointed out in a formal, business-like tone.

"Many thanks. I wish everyone was as anxious to do the right thing as you and John Bellamy are." His eyes were again on the distance and he did not see how closely and curiously Hesther was observing him. "But I've no intention of establishing my identity. I'm dead, and I've the strongest possible objection to being restored to life. No, Hesther, I've neither a crime nor another wife to conceal. It's something more unique. I feel like a disembodied spirit, free from all worldly attachments—past, present and future; and let me tell you it's a fascinating experience. And if you give me enough to meet my reasonable needs, I'll go without any fuss, leaving you completely independent."

"So that I can think of you as existing in any degree of *deadness* I care."

"Why not? You and Phyllis have got used to the idea of my being dead. It's the most difficult thing in the world getting rid of an idea." He turned suddenly toward her and she looked as suddenly away. "What are *your* views, Hesther?" he asked.

"Do they matter?" She seemed to hedge. "John has discussed it with the lawyers," she replied. "The proposed agreement provides for twenty thousand now, and another ten later."

"Well, it's a good working basis anyway," Simon said complacently. "It's not quite half, but then of course there are two persons to provide for against one. And I've no wish that either you or Phyllis should be deprived of more than is necessary."

"You're very accommodating, Simon."

"I can afford to be."

A sudden silence fell between them, filled with a thousand things unsaid. Each seemed to be trying to divine the other's thoughts. Simon threw away his cigar and returned to his study of the landscape while Hesther returned to her covert study of Simon.

"Are you aware this is really the first time we've been alone together?" she asked at last. The business-like tone had disappeared.

"Perfectly. Would you wish it otherwise? To you I am either a complete stranger or an objectionable memory." His voice was curt, as though he deprecated any concession to sentiment. She smiled to herself, a secret, malicious little smile.

"How do we begin?" she inquired innocently.

"Begin?" He looked at her in surprise.

"To negotiate."

"There's nothing at all to negotiate. I'm perfectly satisfied with the sum John mentioned, or with anything less you may choose to give me."

"You weren't always so easy to deal with."

"That's true. But I may have learned a lot."

"Within the last ten years?"

"Within the last five days. Believe me, my sole excuse for troubling you at all was my unfortunate condition," he went on. "I was literally starving and penniless. I needed money, so why not my own? I meant simply to tell you my story, claim enough of my estate to do my turn, and go out of your life again as quickly and completely as possible. That is still my intention. You have been more than kind and I feel most grateful, but there's nothing of the Enoch Arden about *me*."

"Isn't there? Suppose you'd come back and had found me married?"

"Bellamy?"

She ignored the suggestion. "What would you have done?" she persisted.

"Exactly as I'm doing now," he declared, without hesitation. "Clearing out."

"It sounds heroic enough. Unfortunately, however, my recollection keeps getting in the way," she said coldly. "I'm afraid you were never so self-sacrificing as all that."

"Possibly. But how do you know what sort of man I may have become?"

"I don't. As you said, you are either a complete stranger or an objectionable memory."

He rose suddenly and walked across the lawn to the azaleas which he appeared to examine with great interest. Hesther sat quite still. Her hands were clenched in her lap and two bright spots of color burned in her cheeks. Presently he came back, his face grave and drawn a little, as though he were making a painful effort to control himself.

"Will you believe me when I say now that I'm genuinely sorry to have intruded on your happiness even to this brief extent?" he said very earnestly. "When we agreed to part more than ten years ago, I never expected to see you again."

"And never wanted to?" she asked.

"I don't know. We quarreled. I realize I was mainly to blame, and I can only repeat I'm sorry."

"On the other hand I must have irritated you horribly at times." She looked up at him with an appealing smile, and his rather grim expression relaxed.

"I've forgotten all that. Xanthippe wasn't by any means the only wife who invented a philosopher, you know."

THEY both laughed suddenly. She laid her hand upon his sleeve. "Tell me, Simon, d'you think I've changed much?" she asked coaxingly.

"Not at all."

"Still the same wayward, irritating creature?"

"I'd rather not discuss you," he replied uneasily.

"Are you afraid?"

"Perhaps."

"But you still think you're well rid of me. Of course I'm older, I know, but I may be wiser."

He threw off her hand almost violently. "Don't, for God's sake!" he cried. "If I'd known what you were like I'd—I'd never have come back."

"What a charming thing to say to a woman, even if she is your wife! Really, Simon, am I so bad as that?"

"If you only knew what I thought of you!"

"Then what do you think of me?"

"Nothing, nothing."

She stared at him. "You can't mean that you've again fallen in love with me?" she asked incredulously. "But of course not. You're just surprised. After ten years you expected something fat, forty and jeweled in numerous places, but still a perfect lady if kept within bounds—or else lean, languid, neurotic and embarrassingly confessional. Instead you find a comparatively well preserved creature whose slight tendency to *embonpoint* is admirably counteracted by her taste in clothes—a creature, in short, whom ten years of freedom from your disturbing presence has improved out of all recognition."

He was smiling again, reacting quickly to her mood. With a little bow he said, "I would rather say that ten years ago I must have been blind."

She clasped her hands delightedly. "Quite prettily put, Simon. Living with witch doctors must at least have improved your eyesight. And now that we're in a proper negotiating frame of mind I've a suggestion to make. Suppose, for Phyllis's sake, we called quits?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean as an alternative, that you should come back to us and live here."

He started back. "That's impossible—utterly impossible," he said violently.

"Then it's only the money you want?" Her voice resumed its formality. She rose and faced him. Her heightened color and quickened breathing betrayed either anger or agitation. "Well, you're at least frank, and it's consoling to know that you rate us so high as—was it thirty thousand pounds?"

She turned toward the house but he stood in her way. "Forgive me," he begged. "I wish to heaven you could understand! I know you are only suggesting this for the girl's sake, but I know, better than you do, how impossible that is. Sooner or later it would only mean a renewal of the old bitterness and conflict. That's all past now. We can afford to forget it. And if the years have wrought a change in me—so that I've improved in your eyes, don't let's spoil that. This momentary crossing of our paths will perhaps leave you with a memory—well—less hateful than the old."

She regarded him coldly. "Your mind is quite made up?"

"I can say no more," he replied with a shrug.

"Very well. Give me these papers. I'll report the result of our negotiations to John. Perhaps you will make it convenient to complete your business with him not later than tomorrow."

"I quite understand," he said, handing over the envelope.

She walked quickly into the house without another glance in his direction.

CHAPTER XIX

HAVING made certain that no one was hanging about outside, Simon shut the door carefully and the two men faced each other across the dingy little sitting-room, in a silence that seemed to enwrap the whole village.

The younger was the first to speak. "Well, by God, Herrald, you *are* the bloody limit!" he exclaimed. "Why, I don't believe the late lamented Simon himself could have done it as well!"

"You think not?" Hugo Herrald sat down in the only arm chair. He was very calm, but there was a dangerous glint in his eye.

"In fact, if you ask me, you play the part too damned well," the other went on. He waved a hand toward the window. "Take the girl, for instance. She never in her life thought so much of her own father. She's actually grown fond of you, Herrald. It's a solemn fact. You've only to listen to her as I've had to do for the last three or four days. And as for the widow—well, it wouldn't take you another four days to blast the hopes of that old fool for ever."

"Honest John! Have a drink, Curtiss?" Hugo rose and went to the discolored sideboard where he mixed a couple of whiskies and sodas. Then handing a glass to Curtiss he resumed his seat.

Curtiss leaned against the table and lit a cigarette. "Things have gone so mighty well—about 300 per cent better than I ever expected—that it's given me a new idea," he observed.

"Indeed? I'll be glad to hear it."

"My original idea, of course, was for you to turn up as Brent, claim as much of his estate as possible, insist on living separate as before, and clear out," Curtiss continued. "That ass Bellamy has swallowed all my suggestions, and all you've to do is to sign the papers."

"By which you hope to net twenty thousand pounds and I ten," Hugo put in. He sipped his drink, watching the other narrowly.

"But we can do better," Curtiss declared.

"You quite understand, of course, that I'm clearing out tomorrow?" Hugo reminded him.

Curtiss swallowed most of his drink. "That's exactly my point. Why clear out at all? Why not settle down as Simon and enjoy the whole damned shoot."

"You mean what remains of his estate. Is that the new idea?"

"As if it hadn't occurred to yourself." Curtiss leaned forward and patted Hugo almost affectionately on the shoulder. For the first time in their curious association Hugo actively hated the fellow. "No, my dear Herrald, you're not putting that over on me. It's a peaceful and delightful home. Mrs. B is a charming woman and finds you a distinct improvement on the husband she has lost. It's not every man who can indulge in the pleasures of matrimony with so little fuss. If such a chance had come to me, I'd have taken it with both hands and thought myself devilish lucky.'"

For a few moments Hugo appeared to be considering the suggestion. "It's a tempting prospect," he admitted. "But have you considered the risk?"

"Risk?" With a contemptuous gesture Curtiss flicked cigarette ash on the carpet. "There's no risk. They've accepted you absolutely. Put yourself in their place. All along at the back of their minds there's been the fear that some day the real Simon might appear. And when you turned up as you did, after ten years, and they saw a man who looked like Simon Brent, who talked like Simon Brent, and what's more, showed a complete familiarity not only with the household, including friend Bellamy, but with Simon's history and old weaknesses, they jumped at once to the conclusion that he *was* Simon Brent. I think I may congratulate myself as a producer just as much as I can congratulate you as an actor. The moment I saw that photograph I realized the likeness to you and the possibilities of exploiting the situation, but you've got to realize the months of careful study and inquiry I've put in. It's been the triumph of my career. And you must admit that the risk has been less than we imagined."

"You've told me all that before," Hugo said a little impatiently.

Curtiss waved the interruption aside. He mixed himself another drink and Hugo let him talk on. They were both artists, Curtiss insisted, and as such they ought to round off a great artistic achievement. He boasted of his luck. As for risk, that was now negligible. "I've studied what is called the psychology of the thing," he concluded. "Now that they've accepted you, believe me, it will take a hell of a lot to persuade them otherwise. People are like that. Why, the only thing they had to remind them of what their Simon exactly looked like ten years ago was a photograph which curiously enough has been mislaid. I picked you up and set you on your feet, Herrald. You owe it to me to carry out my new plan. You owe it to yourself too. Hesther's a charming woman in every way, and, after all, if you got bored with her you could always part later on."

Hugo threw away the cigarette he had been smoking, finished his drink and sat up in his chair. "And if I fall to this new idea, what would you expect as your share?" he asked quietly.

Curtiss studied his beautifully manicured fingernails. He was obviously considering how high he should pitch his proposal. "I shouldn't ask more than another ten thousand," he replied.

"WHICH, with Phyllis's marriage portion, comes to about half the whole estate."

"Why not? It's not unreasonable—fifty-fifty—when you consider that the whole idea was mine, that I did all the spade work, and afterward helped you to carry it through."

Hugo dropped his bombshell. "Well, my dear Curtiss, I'm not doing it," he said firmly.

"What do you mean?" Curtiss started up, oversetting his glass and sending the contents splashing over the table.

Hugo rose to his feet and faced his confederate squarely. "I mean what I say," he declared. "I may be a scoundrel, but I'm not the sort of damned skunk you are. Let me finish. When you first put this business up to me I was on my beam ends. Women were, as you pointed out, my natural enemies. God knows, I'd little cause to respect them. I was quite prepared to become a real criminal and I'll also admit that the adventure of the thing appealed to me. But in taking it on, I was not to know the character and qualities of the people I had to victimize."

"Good God! I told you enough about them," Curtiss cried.

"In a way. But you didn't tell me that it was your intention to marry the daughter. It's not in our agreement, you know."

"Why the hell should it? That's my affair."

"Not quite," Hugo said quietly. "Let me be perfectly plain. I know your record with women. Either you break off your engagement with the girl and clear out of the house, or I'll expose the whole business."

Curtiss clenched his fists and a vein stood out on his forehead. "So that's your game!" There was a dangerous note in his voice. "No, Herrald, it won't do. I mayn't at the moment grasp your reason, but whatever it is, I know you're not dropping ten thousand over it."

Hugo ignored the implication. "Do you accept my condition?" he asked.

"I suppose you know what exposure would mean?" Curtiss said, trying another tack.

"Perfectly. It would no doubt mean prison. But I've been there before, unfortunately, or I shouldn't have met you. There's a train from here at six o'clock tomorrow evening. Whether I go alone or accompanied by the police depends on your acceptance or refusal. So to afford you the opportunity of withdrawing from your engagement I shall give you till, say, five o'clock tomorrow afternoon."

"And what about the girl? It hasn't occurred to you, I suppose, that she may have to be considered."

"If you mean her happiness, I reckon I'm doing all the considering that's necessary."

"Perhaps you have some other suggestion to make?" Curtiss tried to make his tone heavily sarcastic but there was a tremor in his voice.

"I was just coming to that," Hugo said, "though it's not exactly a suggestion. According to our agreement you were to take two-thirds of whatever sum I as Simon Brent was prepared to accept."

"Well?"

"On consideration, I'm prepared to accept—nothing."

For a moment Curtiss seemed stunned. Then suddenly he sprang to life. "You damned twister!" he cried. "I knew it was a plant; and you think you've got me! But by God——" His hand moved toward his hip pocket and then stopped.

"Better not, Curtiss," Hugo advised calmly enough. "You can't shoot me here, you know."

But as he uttered the words he felt that they lacked conviction, for Curtiss was white with rage and his expression was ugly. He drew a breath of relief when the other presently turned away with a shrug and picked up his hat. Curtiss was even smiling now, a queer, twisted smile. "Sorry, Herrald, I lost my temper for the moment," he apologized. "I'm prepared to concede a bit. What about five thousand?"

"I'm giving you till five o'clock tomorrow. Better clear out before it's too late," Hugo said steadily.

Curtiss shook his head and his twisted smile became contemptuous. "You aren't a very good bluffer, Herrald," he said. "Well, we shall see."

He pushed past Hugo and went clattering down the shaky stairs.

Hugo lit a cigarette and for a few minutes he sat in deep thought. Then he jumped up and seeking out the little cupboard where the inn housed its telephone, he rang up Scotland Yard where he was fortunate enough to catch his old friend Inspector Quentin just as the latter was about to leave for a fortnight's holiday.

CHAPTER XX

THE sky had clouds over and a premature dusk was falling when Hugo reached the gate of Fairlea. The sultry air was heavy with a hundred essences distilled from the garden where the azaleas were passing, and the efflorescence of the two herbaceous borders instantly captured the eye. He walked quietly across the lawn and looked into the lounge through the open French window. Nobody was there and he slipped round the house on a tour of inspection. In the little drawing-room which looked out in the west side he saw Bellamy moving about restlessly and watched him for a few moments from the shadow of the trees, observing his perturbed demeanor with a certain grim amusement. He liked Bellamy, but he could not forbear to chuckle at the thought of his fussing over Simon's delay in turning up in order to settle the matter of the trustees' check, the date for which had been set for this evening.

Outside the garage at the back stood the new two-seater which Curtiss had purchased to give verisimilitude to the character of Basil Ramsay. Hugo had criticized the expense as unnecessary, but Curtiss had waived all objections aside. There was no use spoiling the ship for a ha'pennyworth of paint, Curtiss had pointed out, and soon they would both be able to afford Rolls-Royces. Well, Curtiss was apparently determined to call Hugo's bluff. Clearly he had not yet thrown in his hand, but the presence of the car suggested the possibility that he might have prepared for a hasty departure should the necessity arise.

Hugo returned thoughtfully to the front garden. He quite realized that his life was in danger. It was true that Curtiss was sufficiently astute to devise some ingenious plan that would effectively counter any action Hugo might take without resorting to murder. But murder might be part of his plan. If he could find some safe means of killing his fellow-conspirator before the latter had time to speak he would not hesitate to use it. The stakes were high. The alternative involved the loss of all he had worked so meticulously to gain and the possibility of another term of imprisonment. Hugo fingered the revolver in his pocket. Years ago he had learned to shoot quickly and straight and he had not forgotten the trick.

It was a comfort to know that Quentin would be at hand. That morning the Inspector had received Hugo very kindly in his little room at the Yard where he was finishing off some work prior to taking a fortnight's holiday, and he readily acquiesced in the suggestion that they should lunch together and that he should hear, quite unofficially, what Hugo had to say. Over their coffee and cigars Hugo made the statement which he had carefully thought out. Quentin had listened at first incredulously and then with intense interest. "Well, Mr. Herrald," the Inspector said, "I don't like a busman's holiday, but I've an old aunt living up in Oxfordshire that I'd like to visit, and I don't say it wouldn't be easy to take in Chipping Eden in passing. Besides, what you say is really interesting. I've not come across a similar case personally, but there was one like it recently in Italy where the question of whether the man was a missing professor named Capella or an ex-convict named Brupen was fought out in the courts by the respective families. You realize, of course, that this may mean a prosecution?" Hugo explained that he was quite prepared to accept that. For some minutes the Inspector had sat deep in thought, his head enveloped in cigar smoke, then he had risen suddenly and gripped Hugo by the hand. "I'll do it, sir—unofficially, of course," he promised. "You've had a bad break and no mistake. I may tell you now that I don't believe it was you who stole Lady Elliston's jewels and I've a pretty shrewd suspicion which of the guests was the guilty party. It was a mistake to take the blame on yourself, Mr. Herrald. These women aren't worth it. And all I can say is this, Mrs. Brent must be a very charming lady."

"She is," Hugo said simply.

STANDING there in Hesther's garden, awaiting the Inspector's arrival, he thought again what a charming lady she was. He lit a cigarette and strolled over to the roses thinking a great deal about Hesther, her hair, her voice, the delicious roguery of her smile, the way she put her head on one side like a bird listening, the dear fussy little gestures of her hands, her delightful old-fashioned mannerisms. He sniffed the roses and sighed. For the first time he knew the real meaning of romance. She had it in her power to send him to prison again. He would go willingly. This time he didn't care. Her happiness was all that mattered.

If she let him go his path henceforth would be a straight one. For a little his life had touched Dora Carter's and the contact had sent him bitterly along the crooked ways; then it had touched Hesther's and the way became straight again; straighter, indeed, than ever before. But there was no reason why it should at the same time be a narrow one. He was still comparatively young—physically he felt younger and fitter than he had for years. In his pocket was a check to repay the hundred pounds that Bellamy had advanced to him out of Simon Brent's estate. After that was paid he would have between seven and eight hundred pounds of his own money left. How many men came out of prison with any resources at all?

His thoughts switched back to Hesther. He wondered what she would do. Women were so incalculable. Of course it would be a tremendous shock to her to learn of the deception that had been practiced on her. It had all been so horribly easy. Curtiss was right. Women were rather stupid, easy game for the bold and ruthless man, and Hesther had proved no exception. He plucked a little Emma Wright from the nearest rose-bush, inhaled its fragrance and stuck it in his buttonhole. Curse his romanticism. Why wasn't he bold and ruthless . . .?

Presently he was hailed by Tony Heath who entered the garden from Bishopsmead park by his customary route. The boy addressed him as Mr. Henderson and inquired if he wasn't having dinner with Mrs. Brent. He mumbled something about waiting for somebody and Tony went into the house. He had forgotten all about Tony coming here this evening. It might be awkward.

A faint whistle caused him to look up. Curtiss was standing at the open French window of the lounge beckoning him. He strode quickly across the lawn and entered the room.

"Look here, are you going to stick to your bargain, take the money and clear out?" Curtiss asked at once.

"You heard what I said yesterday. You ought to have left here by now," said Hugo. "I see your car's waiting."

There's No Knowing

Curtiss smiled sarcastically. "Thanks, Herrald. Good of you I'm sure, but I'm afraid I must disappoint you and young Heath also."

But Hugo was in no mood to exercise patience. Curtiss had some plan up his sleeve and the sooner he knew what it was the better. "There's no time to waste, Curtiss. I gave you your chance of breaking off the engagement and explaining the necessity for leaving. Instead I find you here with matters as they were. Your car's waiting. You've got to clear out now."

"Aren't you being a little abrupt yourself? I'm also going to give you another chance. Put your cards on the table. What's your game?"

"I'm clearing out too."

"You're quitting?"

"I am," Hugo answered firmly.

"Then I'm damned if you'll get away with it," Curtiss cried. His hand went to his pocket and drew out a revolver, but he found himself already covered by Hugo's.

"Drop it—quick," Hugo commanded.

There was a pause in which they stared at each other, Hugo pale and determined, Curtiss ugly and menacing. If the latter's hand came up Hugo knew he would have to shoot instantly.

WITH a slight shrug Curtiss dropped his revolver and still keeping him covered, Hugo picked it up and put in his pocket.

"That's better," Hugo said. "I rather expected you might try to get rid of me."

Curtiss was smiling again. "You're asking a hell of a lot, Herrald," he remarked as Hugo stepped back a couple of paces. "I might have put up a fight, but there's no use disturbing a peaceful household when we can settle this another time. What's more, I never went back on a pal in any deal, and I've no intention of assisting you to walk out on this. I'll go now, if you'll wait outside until I get my things."

"I'll wait here. I give you five minutes."

Hugo glanced at his watch and at the same instant Curtiss sprang upon him, and dealing him a severe blow in the pit of the stomach seized his wrist and bent it back so that the pistol was turned slowly upon his breast. Taken by surprise he came within an ace of discharging the weapon with fatal results for himself. A grim and silent struggle ensued. Hugo, momentarily crippled by the effects of the sudden onslaught, gasped for breath, and a black curtain seemed to have dropped in front of his eyes. The strength of Curtiss' wrist and fingers was amazing, and despite all his efforts he could feel the gradual twisting of the pistol, in the direction of his heart, and the increasing pressure about the trigger. He realized the other's devilish plan. Unless he could wrench himself free the muzzle would in a few seconds be over his heart and at the right instant the revolver would be discharged and an apparent suicide would result.

As they stood swaying and panting, the sudden opening of the door distracted the attention of Curtiss for a moment and Hugo, wrenching himself free, struggled back to find himself facing Hesther.

"Simon!" she cried sharply.

"Thank God! You're just in time," Curtiss gasped.

Hesther advanced toward Hugo with horrified eyes. "Oh, how wicked. It's too dreadful! Now do please be reasonable, Simon, and give that to me."

"If you wish it," Hugo said and handed the weapon to her. Holding it very gingerly with the tips of her fingers she rang the bell. "Are you quite all right, Basil?" she asked.

Curtiss was mopping his brow. "Yes—fortunately. But it was a near thing."

A strange man, rather stout and wearing an ill-fitting black jacket, appeared. Hesther handed him the revolver. "Take that horrible thing away, Fielding," she instructed. "And ask Mr. Bellamy and the others to come here at once."

"Where's Bassett?" Hugo asked.

Hesther sat down. "He's not feeling very well tonight and sent up his cousin. He's a waiter in some hotel, I believe."

When Phyllis, John and Tony came into the room Hugo observed that they were all staring at him in a curious way as though they expected some sudden outbreak on his part. Bellamy patted him fussily on the shoulder while young Heath took up a position by the window.

"We've just had a dreadful scene," Hesther said, sitting down on the sofa, "and I am waiting for Simon to explain."

Hugo lit a cigarette with shaking fingers. He had quite recovered from his struggle with Curtiss, but now that the time had come to make his revelation he felt suddenly nervous. Curtiss lounging with his hands in his pockets watched him with mocking eyes. If only he knew what the fellow was getting at! Obviously he had no immediate fear of anything Hugo might say. "As it happens, Mrs. Brent, there's a good deal to explain, but I'll be as brief as I can," Hugo began. "In the first place I'm not Simon Brent at all."

Hesther stared at him. "Now what on earth are you saying, Simon?"

Hugo saw Curtiss and Bellamy exchange glances, while the latter shook his head, and there suddenly flashed upon him the terrible idea that they thought him mad. "I mean exactly what I say. I'm an impostor," he persisted.

Phyllis came to his side and quietly took his hand in hers, telling him he ought to lie down and that he would feel better in the morning. Her solicitude was exasperating.

"If I may make the suggestion, I think Mr. Brent ought to go back to the inn at once and rest," Curtiss put in smoothly. "He's not well."

"Quite right. I think so too, Simon," Bellamy agreed. "Another night, I'm sure, makes little difference, and in the morning you may be much better able to attend to business."

"He doesn't require to go back to the inn," Phyllis maintained. "He should never have been there. He can stay *here* and rest."

Hesther looked up at Hugo with a smile that showed an irresistible little dimple. It seemed to him that she had entirely got over her horror of a few minutes ago and that she was somehow positively enjoying the situation. "I agree. Don't you think that wiser, Simon?" she asked sweetly.

"I certainly am staying here," Hugo answered, "but only for the purpose of explaining who I am."

Bellamy seated himself beside Hesther. "Then let's sit down and discuss the whole thing calmly," he said, in humoring tones. "If, as you state, you are not Simon Brent, who do you say you are?"

"My real name is Hugo Herrald. I'm an ex-convict who has done time for larceny and assault, with an unfortunate taste for the adventurous or anything that promised difficulty."

"Father! Why are you talking such rot?" Phyllis cried.

"I am not your father. I'm as like him as two peas. I was told his story and at the same time persuaded to pass myself off as him by the gentleman whom you call dear Basil, but whose name is something quite different."

"Come, come, Simon!" Bellamy put in.

Curtiss spread out his hands in a gesture of helplessness. "You see? I'm afraid he's quite hopeless," he observed. "As I mentioned, this is more or less what he's been saying all day."

HUGO took a deep breath. So that was Curtiss' game! The others had been cunningly prepared for anything he might say or do. The psychology of the thing was simple. Once people had accepted an idea it was extraordinarily difficult to drive it out of their heads. Well, it had to be done.

"He came to me some months ago with the proposal," he went on. "We'd been in prison together, and that's how, when he came amongst you, he recognized my resemblance to the deceased Simon Brent. How he gained your confidence you know best; but in doing that he at the same time gained all the information he needed regarding Mr. Brent and his past life." He glanced at Hesther. She was quite calm and looking at him with a puzzled rather than a shocked expression. But then he couldn't expect her to be shocked when Curtiss had already prepared her for the delusions of an unhinged mind. He went on to tell her how the scheme had contained more than a spice of danger, how it appealed to his sense of humor and tickled his vanity. From the moment he had seen Simon's photograph in Curtiss' rooms he had realized the possibilities of the thing. It only required skill and assurance. During the weeks of preparation he had applied himself to the part, learning by heart all the bits of information about Simon which Curtiss had so patiently gathered, studying and copying the writing and signature from the bundle of Simon's letters which Curtiss had purloined, practising that trace of American accent which Curtiss had learned that Simon possessed, acquiring mannerisms and gestures which belonged to the real Simon. "The idea was that the sea should wash me up at the right moment. The fact that I'd lived apart from Mrs. Brent, that she hadn't seen me

for over ten years, that Phyllis had only visited me occasionally when a little girl, was to make things easy. I had merely to appear for a few days, claim some of Simon Brent's money, then clear out and share the spoil with friend Basil. The plan was his, the execution mine. Both, you'll admit, were admirable."

"Are you actually suggesting, Simon, that I don't know my own husband?" Hesther asked mildly.

"Or that I don't know my father?" Phyllis echoed.

Bellamy cleared his throat. "You know you're talking nonsense, Simon," he said brusquely. "If what you say were true, why on earth should you tell us?"

"Remorse or conscience, perhaps. You must understand that when this gentleman first told me of his plan, his description of Mrs. Brent and her daughter hardly prepared me for what I found them to be. I imagined an unattractive elderly widow——"

"The man's mad," interrupted Hesther, sitting up suddenly.

"Still less was I prepared for the—the kindness I received at their hands. I didn't at all like the idea of swindling them. Still I might have gone on with it had not my partner proceeded to ensnare the daughter."

CURTISS took a couple of steps toward Hugo and stood with fists clenched and an admirable assumption of the expression of an outraged English gentleman. "Look here! I'm not minding, really, but don't you think for her sake, this has gone far enough?" he said.

"Dear Basil has not the best of records, I'm sorry to say," Hugo went on, ignoring the interruption. "His real name is Curtiss. Besides being a clever swindler, he has a long series of triumphs over the fair sex to his account. Under the *alias* of Robinson he has been convicted of bigamy, and under that of Theodore of trafficking in women. I might have known——"

"Mr. Brent! Do you realize what you're saying?" Curtiss cried.

"He can't," Bellamy said. "This is a case for the doctor." He started to his feet.

"A moment, and I'm finished," Hugo told him. "I gave Curtiss till this evening to break off his engagement and clear out. A quarter of an hour ago I came for his answer, and as I quite expected, his answer was to try and shoot me."

"My God—the cunning!" Curtiss cried. He appealed to Hesther. "From what you saw, can you believe that, Mrs. Brent?"

"I certainly can't," Hesther replied.

"But what's all this about shooting?" Bellamy inquired. Hesther described the struggle with the revolver which she had witnessed and the others looked at Hugo in horror.

"Then you don't believe me?" Hugo asked her.

"How can I, when the revolver was not in his hand but in yours, and I distinctly saw it pointed——"

"Very well," Hugo said briskly. "Will you do me a favor, Tony? I think you'll find a gentleman in a bowler hat down by the azaleas. Will you ask him to step this way?"

Tony hesitated and looked at Hesther as though in doubt as to whether he should comply with the lunatic's request. Before she could speak Curtiss started toward the window. "You'd better let me go," he said quickly. "You never know what a mind like his is up to." His bland confidence had disappeared and sweat stood on his brow.

Hesther stopped him. "I want you to wait here," she said sharply. "You run out, Tony." She turned to Hugo as the boy left by the window. "What are you going to do?" she asked.

"Prove it," Hugo replied.

"But the man's off his head," Curtiss burst out.

"I know. Still, don't you think it best to humor him?" Hesther said soothingly. "Besides, I'm anxious to see his friend in the bowler hat."

Curtiss assumed an air of nonchalance, plunged his hands into his pockets and drew a little nearer to the window, but he could not hide from Hugo his agitation and the suspicion with which he regarded this new move. There was a sudden, strained silence in which they all looked toward the garden waiting for Tony's reappearance. So far Curtiss' capacity for bluff had triumphed and Hugo, glancing at the others in turn could not detect, except in the case of Curtiss himself, any change of attitude. Bellamy and Phyllis were plainly incredulous but prepared to humor one who had taken at least temporary leave of his senses; and it seemed as though Hugo's attack upon Curtiss had defeated its end by increasing her sympathy for the man to whom she had engaged herself. How could it be otherwise? Hugo had seen enough of her to estimate her loyal and affectionate nature.

Two minutes passed. Hugo threw away his cigarette. If Quentin should fail him, things might be worse than they would have been had he said nothing. And then to his intense relief he saw the Inspector's broad, homely figure coming across the lawn, and all his doubts melted. He led Quentin up to Hesther at once.

"Let me introduce Inspector Quentin of the Criminal Records Department, Scotland Yard," he said. "The Inspector and I are old acquaintances."

Hat in hand, the Inspector made a quaint bow. "I've known Mr. Herrald a long time and I've measured him up more than once," he said genially. Then cocking his eye toward Curtiss he added, "And I think I may say the same for you, Curtiss."

"You may say it, but fortunately you're entirely mistaken," Curtiss said.

"Of course he is," Phyllis declared stoutly.

Quentin smiled. "I think not, miss. On the last occasion we met he'd a mustache, it's true."

"For heaven's sake let's get this straight!" cried Bellamy, sitting down helplessly. "What does it all really mean?"

Quentin shrugged his shoulders. "It's for Mr. Herrald to explain. I was brought here to identify two ex-convicts, and I wish every job was as easy."

"I'm sorry I've been forced to do this," Hugo said earnestly, turning to Hesther, "but I had no other means of convincing you that I wasn't Simon Brent. I've explained things to the Inspector. He can satisfy you that I am Hugo Herrald and that the man you know as Basil Ramsay is a well known criminal."

"It's a damned lie," Curtiss cried furiously. He strode toward Hugo with clenched fists and his features distorted with rage. Then his anger suddenly subsided and he assumed his usual mask of urbanity. "I don't suppose it's a bit necessary for me to deny all this, Mrs. Brent," he appealed. "It's clear that in his crazy dislike for me Mr. Brent will stick at nothing to injure me—no matter how vile the trick. This is a put up job." He pointed a finger dramatically at Quentin. "He's got to back up his accusations somehow and he has bribed this man to do it."

"What? You mean to say he's not a policeman?" Hesther cried.

"No more than I am Curtiss with the awful, and I suspect, wholly mythical past"

THE Inspector laughed. "I'm Inspector Quentin all right," he said.

"So *you* say," Hesther retorted. "But with so many people insisting that they are somebody else, how are we to know you aren't an impostor as this gentleman says?"

"I'm sorry I haven't any references with me, madam." The Inspector looked coolly at Curtiss. "I'm even sorrier I haven't at the moment a warrant to arrest."

Bellamy was on his feet again. "Arrest, sir? I would call that an outrage."

The Inspector took something from his coat pocket and handed it to Hesther. "It might be awkward, madam, if we hadn't had a warrant to search for stolen goods in Curtiss' rooms in London, where he's been living under the name of Theodore," he said. "We found this photograph, which Mr. Herrald tells me had disappeared from your house."

"Thank you," Hesther said quietly. She rose and touched the bell, then stood for a few moments glancing from the photograph to Hugo. "I'm rather glad to get it back again."

"Whose photograph is it, Mother?" Phyllis asked.

"Your father's. The one that went missing."

The girl swung viciously upon Curtiss, who fell back before her hurt and angry eyes. "Then *you* took it," she flashed.

He made no reply but glanced uneasily at the door where Fielding had just entered.

"I rang for you, Fielding," said Hesther. She indicated Quentin. "Do you know this gentleman?"

"I do," Fielding replied at once. "He is Inspector Quentin in charge of the Records at the Yard."

Suddenly Curtiss made a bound for the window and, thrusting Tony rudely to one side, leaped into the garden and ran round the end of the house. Tony was about to follow but Hesther called him back. Next minute they heard the staccato roar of the two-seater as it raced down the drive.

"Never mind—we'll get him all right if necessary,"

Quentin remarked, then greeted Fielding as an old acquaintance. The latter, it seemed, had been an officer at Scotland Yard until a couple of years ago when he had left the force and set up a private detective agency of his own.

"But I thought you were a waiter in a hotel," said John Bellamy, running his fingers distractedly through his hair. "How did you come here?"

"I came on Mrs. Brent's instructions, sir," Fielding replied.

Hesther sat down again and lit a cigarette. "I'm afraid it's all my doing," she explained. "I wasn't sure how things were going to turn out, and I felt I ought to have some protection, so I arranged for Mr. Fielding to come to the house. I may have been mistaken in Basil, but not in Mr. Herrald. You see, I knew he wasn't Simon all along."

CHAPTER XXI

HESTHER turned on one rose-shaded lamp and sitting down in the pink glow motioned Hugo beside her. For the first time he realized that she was not wearing black this evening, but a pretty flowered frock that made her look absurdly and delightfully girlish. Beyond the open window the garden was falling asleep in the dusk, but as yet no rain came from the darkening sky. Hugo looked curiously and with a new and respectful understanding at the woman he had thought so easily to deceive. It seemed incredible that he had ever brought himself to attempt such a thing; and even more incredible that she had not been deceived at all.

Tony and Phyllis crossed the lawn and wandered toward the shrubbery. The girl's arm was linked in the boy's. Hesther's eyes followed them until they were beyond her line of vision, then with a little sigh she helped herself to a cigarette and pushed the box in Hugo's direction.

"As a substitute for the pipe of peace—with which among the savages you were possibly familiar—won't you have a cigarette?" she asked mischievously.

"Thank you." Hugo lit her cigarette and his own, then waited for her to go on, but for a little she remained silent, gazing absently into the garden. At last she turned and said, "Tell me—why did you do it?"

"I was on my beam ends," Hugo replied simply. "Adventure attracts me—and Curtiss, as you know, can be very persuasive."

"I didn't mean that. Why didn't you carry the thing through?"

"Sentiment, perhaps. Even crooks aren't all cold-blooded. Human nature's the unknown quantity you can never calculate on. I suppose that's why many criminals are so unsuccessful." He glanced toward the garden. "It may surprise you to hear it, but I took an odd liking for the little girl and—well—I couldn't have her victimized."

She looked down at her cigarette and flicked the ash very carefully into a tray. "Was that your only reason?" she asked in a low voice.

"No." Hugo hesitated a moment. "It was sentiment again, perhaps. You see, I hadn't met anyone just like you; and if I've any grievance at all against Curtiss it is that he ought to have warned me."

"What did you expect to find?"

"Keeping your matrimonial experience in view, I had pictured an elderly and—unattractive—widow with a somewhat shrewish temper. It was a great shock. I really never got over it."

The dancing brown eyes looked up and met his for an instant, then quickly dropped again. "Then you didn't think me quite so dreadful?"

"Dreadful? Why—I—Mrs. Brent, the best way I could show you what I thought was to try to insure your happiness. It didn't take me long to discover where that happiness lay, and I meant to put no further obstacle in Bellamy's path."

She nodded. "He has waited a long time, hasn't he?" She stopped. Then, "Surely, all crooks aren't just like you?"

"In what way?"

"For one thing, in the way you talk."

"I had the advantage of what is called a superior education," he explained.

"Which my poor Simon had not." She sighed. "It was one of the first things to arouse my suspicion. Another thing was the money. Simon would never have consented to take a portion of his estate. He'd have taken the lot and given me and Phyllis an allowance. But these weren't really the things that gave you so hopelessly away." She hesitated a moment and her eyes met his squarely. "I'm not quite sure that I should tell you. Promise me you won't take advantage of it to deceive some other elderly and unattractive widow?"

He held out his hand and she allowed hers to rest in his clasp. "I promise," he said.

Presently she withdrew her hand gently and went on. "Your resemblance to Simon is remarkable, but a woman doesn't know a man by his outside, the shape of his nose, the size of his feet. If she knows him at all, she knows him inside out. Not even in his best moments had Simon any pretensions to charm. You both said and did a score of things that wouldn't even have occurred to Simon, had he lived to be as old as Methuselah. In short, you are a gentleman, aren't you?"

"I—was a gentleman."

She rose and went slowly to the window. He picked up his hat and followed her. For a while they stood silently side by side, looking at the shadowy garden.

"Well," she said, facing him, "I suppose that's all. It has been rather an experience for both of us, hasn't it?" There was a little catch in her voice.

He stood looking down at her. "I shall never forget it," he said.

"And—the future?"

"You mean—can the leopard change his spots? Well, I've never been a real crook and I can assure you the spots were only painted on by—various means. They've all been washed off for always. Will you believe that?"

"I believe it." She held out her hand. "Good-bye—Simon I wish you the best of luck."

He took her hand, bowed and kissed it. "Good-bye," he said.

AT the window he met Phyllis coming in. "Won't *you* say good-bye?" he asked.

She took his hand in her soft firm little clasp. "Yes. I—I wanted to." Her voice was trembling.

He stumbled through the window and made his way unseeingly down the darkening garden, not noticing the rain which had now begun to fall.

In the still room Hesther and Phyllis, so like two sisters, stood watching the dim figure until it was ought of sight. John Bellamy found them standing there when he came in from the hall a minute later. His honest face glowed with a partly subdued satisfaction.

"Well, I've given the Inspector a whisky-and-soda and shown him out," he said, with an assumption of cheerfulness. "A most interesting man, Hesther." He glanced round the room. "Oh, has he gone?" he asked.

"Yes," Hesther answered in a choked voice. Save for two burning spots of color at her cheek-bones her face was very pale. A handkerchief screwed into a tiny tight ball was clenched in her hand.

Tony stepped in at the window. "Well, I'm hanged if I ever thought I'd shake hands with an ex-convict," he said as he turned down his collar and brushed the glistening rain drops from his dinner jacket.

"Don't, Tony!" Phyllis moaned. Suddenly she put her hands to her eyes and fled from the room.

"Damn it all, I do believe she's crying," Tony cried, gazing after her in surprise.

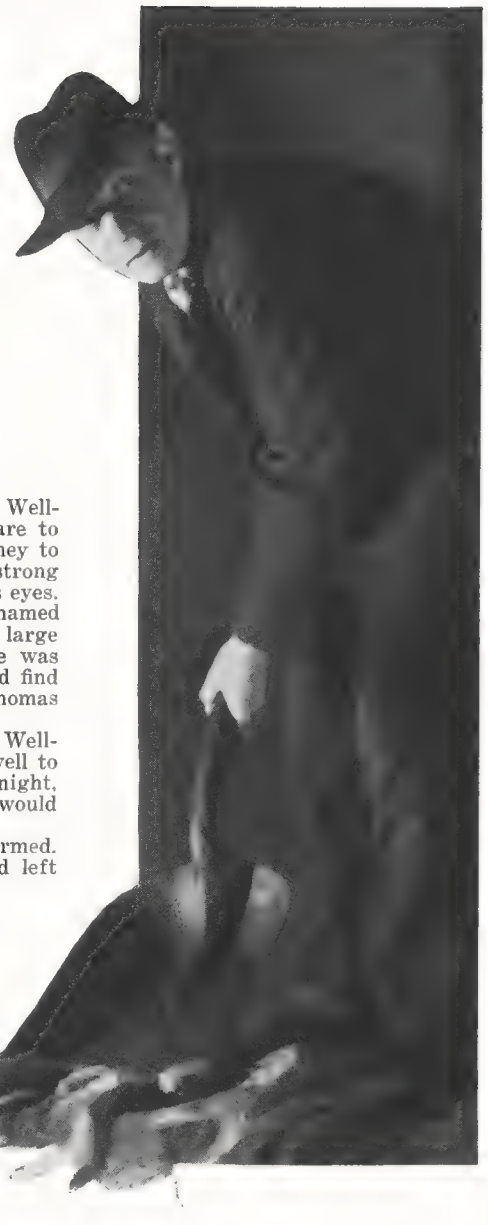
"I'm afraid she is, Tony," said Hesther in a strained voice. "It's the one thing you can never calculate on—human nature."

Honest John, anxious as ever to help, turned from the door through which Phyllis had departed to comfort Hesther—only to have his startled eyes behold the empty room, and the open window! Through it, he could see Hesther, skirts gathered about her shapely knees, running through the rain after the dim figure of Hugo.

Honest John stood motionless a long moment, then turned dejectedly back into the room, and picked up his hat.

The Parade of the RODENTS

A famous true-life mystery drama—complete on this page! The Episode of the Man Who Disappeared on Christmas



The accompanying photograph was posed by a model, portraying the character in the story and made in Tower Studios.

CHARLES COVELL was an immensely wealthy contractor in Wellington, Kansas, and as democratic a man as you would care to meet in a month of Sundays. Unselfish, he handed out money to the needy with a lavish hand; but he was an individual of strong character, and woe unto the man who tried to pull the wool over his eyes.

Among Covell's many employes was a sullen man, a carpenter named Joe Thomas, father of a large family. Thomas repeatedly borrowed large sums of money from his good-natured employer, saying that he was investing it in real estate. The day was coming when Covell would find out that Thomas was really using the money for gambling, and Thomas knew it.

So, on the morning of February 23, 1925, Covell and Thomas left Wellington for Wichita, twenty miles away, where Thomas wanted Covell to look over some real estate he said he was interested in. That night, Thomas drove back alone, telling Covell's wife that her husband would be delayed in Wichita on business for a couple of days.

When Covell was unheard from for a week, his wife became alarmed. The police, openly suspicious of Thomas, questioned him. He had left Covell in a Wichita speakeasy, he said with a shrug. The speakeasy proprietor, a man of good reputation, corroborated Thomas' alibi.

Months passed. Covell had vanished as completely as if he had been whisked off to another planet. No one, it seems, had seen him after he left the speakeasy.

Then, on Christmas Day of 1925, Joe Thomas suddenly disappeared for no apparent reason.

This act served to fan anew the smouldering embers of suspicion that had surrounded the man since Covell's strange disappearance. The authorities had searched his home and the surrounding territory on many previous occasions, but now that the man was out of the way they decided on a much more thorough search.

Among other things, the man's grim, ramshackle garage, with its dirt flooring, attracted their attention. They dug several feet into the earth, but found nothing. Then they tore the garage down, and still found nothing.

So, interest in the search died down, although interest in the case never died. But what was there to do about it? A man certainly could leave town if he felt like it.

One day in the spring of 1926, when Mother Nature was putting on her green finery, Joe Thomas' father-in-law, William Batson, who had come to live with Thomas' family when the man deserted them, noticed a strange thing. A horde of rats that had apparently appeared overnight, had burrowed a tunnel into the ground where the old garage had once stood. The rodents were scurrying into one hole, out of the other, and across to the first hole again in a swift, unlovely parade. Batson watched the weird performance, strangely fascinated.

The man was wondering what had drawn the rats to the scene when suddenly he noticed emanating from the holes a white, pungent vapor that smelled strongly of quicklime. Fearing the worst, Batson went over to the tunnel of the rodents and jabbed a pitchfork into the earth several times. Presently, it struck something soft—the remains of a human form.

The body was beyond recognition, what with natural decomposition, and the ravages of the rats and the quicklime. But there was a large piece of cloth that was proved to be from one of Charles Covell's suits!

Picked up in Marshall, Arkansas, to which point he had fled, sullen Joe Thomas admitted the murder of his benefactor. He had waited that day in Wichita until Covell left the speakeasy, then induced him to return to Wellington. On the way home, he beat him to death with a bludgeon and concealed the body in the back of the car, burying it that night. Thomas had feared that Covell would have him arrested when the contractor learned what had happened to the money he had loaned him.

"I buried the body good and deep, figuring it would never be found," confessed the slayer. "I didn't figure on them damned rats."

The Black BOW

SHORTLY before noon on Saturday, August 27, 1927, a cop, driving a police flivver through the Mosholu Parkway tunnel in New York's sprawling Bronx, discovered a dead man slumped down in the right-hand seat of a parked blue coupe. A bullet had been fired into the man's right ear and, taking an upward course, had plowed through the left side of the band of his straw "katie." Papers on the man's person identified him as socially prominent Judson Pratt, twenty-eight, a construction engineer affiliated with a large contracting company.

The police had been scouring the city for Judson Pratt. Each Saturday morning he drove from the offices of the contracting company to the scene of a big apartment house project at Fifty-second Street and the East River with a payroll of about five thousand dollars. This morning, however, he had failed to appear at the East River site after leaving the home offices with the money bag. The spot where he was found was several miles from his business orbit, and the money bag was missing.

Police Inspector Henry Bruckman, one of the shrewdest minds in the Department, examined Pratt's hat. The bullet, in passing through the hat, had severed the bow of the black outer band—and the bow was nowhere to be found. That was Inspector Bruckman's first clue.

"There are powder burns on Pratt's right ear," Inspector Bruckman announced to his fellow sleuths. "That means that the shot was fired at close range. It also means that Pratt knew and trusted the killer—*for the killer was riding in the car with him.*

"Pratt was undoubtedly sitting in the left-hand seat, at the driver's wheel. For if he had been shot while sitting in the right-hand seat, where he was found, the bow of his hat, on his left, would have dropped into the driver's seat, also on his left.

"But, you see, the bow's missing. The killer had no reason to take it. That means that Pratt was sitting at the wheel, because the bow on the average man's hat when he's at the wheel of a car is about even with the side of the machine, and the bow of Pratt's hat probably dropped onto the running board or into the street when the bullet clipped it off. If we can find that bow, we'll at least know where the crime was committed."

At four o'clock that afternoon, Mrs. Babette Shyttle, who lived less than a block from the East River construction project, called the police. She had read newspaper accounts of the crime, and informed the police that she had seen a blue coupe, such as the one Pratt had been found in, in front of her home that morning. Two men, neither of whose features she remembered, were in the car.

While a group of detectives questioned Mrs. Shyttle, another group, remembering Inspector Bruckman's words, searched the street in the vicinity. And, wonder of wonders, one of them picked up a black bow that proved to be the missing part of the murdered man's hat-band!

Thus the scene of the dastardly crime was definitely established through the strangest of coincidences.

The rest was comparatively easy. "Handsome Dan" Graham, known as the Adonis of the Police Department, had for a long time accompanied and guarded Pratt on the Saturday morning journeys from his office to the East River. This day, however, Graham had been officially off duty on sick leave. But two boys in the neighborhood of the murder scene had heard what they thought was an automobile backfire, seen a blue coupe stop, Graham get out of the passenger's seat, walk around to the other side of the car, shove a man wearing a straw "katie" over to the right-hand seat, and drive off!

The boys had attached little significance to the incident, however, and said that they wouldn't have mentioned it had not detectives questioned them. And the sleuths probably wouldn't have questioned them had it not been for the little black bow!

Graham was picked up. Some of the missing money was found on his person. It had been cold-blooded murder for personal gain. And a rather well-planned murder. Off on sick leave, the traitor cop officially removed himself from any implication in the murder. So he thought. Knowing the route Pratt traversed, however, he intercepted him on the way, offering to guard him, then killed the engineer. After the crime Graham drove through the center of New York with a dead man at his side, finally leaving the body in the desolate tunnel.

The Adonis of the Department went to the chair.

Which Man's Eyes

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employer, and as jealous as hell of her professionally. This conflict of feelings caused him to perform some strange capers. George Slosson made believe to be smitten with me, too. It was exciting because he was very much of a man in his quiet, efficient way, but I resented it because I didn't think he meant it. He was just copying his boss.

"Certainly we're going to catch this crook," said Mme. Storey. "Let's lay out our plan of campaign here and now."

Barron paled a little. "But, Rosika, you've got to keep out of it! I couldn't let you take this risk!"

Unseen by the others Slosson threw an arm around me and gave me a little squeeze as much as to say he shared these sentiments. I edged out of the way.

Mme. Storey dropped her smiling air. "Now look here, Barron," she said. "I'm not going to waste time arguing with you. You ought to know me by this time. If I took a dare from this crook I could never again look myself in the face. I'll work with you if you want. Otherwise I'll go ahead on my own."

"I don't like it!" muttered Barron.

"Never mind that." Mme. Storey fixed him with a steady eye. "This time we are going to give the gang a fight to a finish," she said meaningly. "It is something they have never been up against. There can be only one outcome."

"If they don't get you," he muttered unhappily.

"If they get me you can carry on," she retorted. "I already have the finger-prints of the man we want, and his photograph."

"What good is a photograph of a man who was completely disguised?"

"He couldn't disguise the expression of his eyes. I shall concentrate on that . . . What information have you about the gang?"

Barron looked at Slosson for his cue. Barron in his trim uniform and gold-braided hat made a superb looking inspector, but Slosson was really the brains of his office. Barron leaned on him heavily, and I must say Slosson had never let him down yet. Slosson had the entire business of the detective force at his fingertips.

He now gave us the history of the gang that controlled the liquor trade in lower New York. "What they call themselves we don't know," he said. "We refer to them as Joe Paglar's mob, though Paglar himself bit the asphalt eighteen months ago. Since then they have had two leaders who have come to violent ends. The present boss of the outfit is Mike Casini."

"What about him?" asked Mme. Storey.

"Casini is one of the best known characters south of Grand Street. Famous for his diamonds, his girls, his bodyguards who accompany him everywhere, his armored cars. He runs a flossy 'speak' on Delancey Street, and that is presumably the headquarters of the gang."

"What sort of looking man?"

"An Italian about forty years old; short; enormously fat."

"Not our man," said Mme. Storey instantly. "Casini I take it, is just another figurehead willing for the sake of a little power and glory to put himself up to be shot at."

"No doubt," said Slosson.

"Do you know any other members of the gang?" she asked.

Slosson read out a list of names.

"What are you going to do?" Barron demanded.

"Better not ask me," she said smiling. "When the case is ready you shall strike and all the credit will be yours."

Barron scowled heavily. He hated to have his hand forced, but as he had nothing better to propose he was

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The SECRET *in the* Flower Box

A famous true-life mystery drama—complete on this page! The Episode of the Man Who Confessed!

This photograph was posed by a model portraying the character in the story and made in Tower Studios.

WARREN J. LINCOLN, mild-mannered, self-effacing little proprietor of a greenhouse in Aurora, Illinois, vanished from his home under sinister circumstances on the night of April 29th, 1923, and the curtain was raised on one of the strangest death enigmas that the United States has ever known.

When police searched the premises, they found several rooms of the pretty Lincoln cottage, where the man had for some time been living alone, splattered with blood. A desk had been broken open and ransacked. Lincoln's clothes were strewn about the floor—hardly his own handiwork, for he was a neat man. In the yard back of the cottage sleuths found the man's night-shirt, stained with blood. Nearby was a crimson-splotched Indian club.

Lincoln's body (surely this was murder!) was nowhere to be found, and the general supposition was that the slayers had disposed of it elsewhere.

General suspicion was directed against the man's estranged wife and her brother, Byron Shoup, who had, until three months previously, lived at the cottage. The woman had hen-pecked her husband, and her brother always sided with her, making Warren Lincoln's life, all in all, a most unpleasant one. And so it was that Lincoln had breathed a sigh of relief when he announced that his wife and her brother had left for good following a bitter quarrel with him. But his relief had been short-lived. He reported to the police that his wife and brother-in-law were continually threatening his life via long-distance and had bluntly informed him that if they didn't kill him they would hire some one to do so.

While the search for the slayers of Lincoln was apparently at its zenith, Lincoln returned to Aurora, alive and well! He told a strange story of having been abducted by his two kin and later held by a gang in Cleveland.

Lincoln talked and talked, and after he had told many conflicting stories about his abduction he was arrested charged with the murder of his wife and Byron Shoup!

"I've been suspicious of you since you disappeared, Lincoln," the Chief of Police told him. *"Those blood-stains in your cottage and on your night-shirt were not human blood, but chicken blood."*

Lincoln confessed to murdering his wife and brother-in-law because they had made his life unbearable, and then staging a set of circumstances to shield his guilt.

"But," he added with a sinister smile, "I destroyed the bodies. I'm guilty—but you have no *corpus delicti* and therefore you can't convict me in court."

Lincoln was right! He couldn't be convicted! Vain, he elaborated on how he had disposed of the bodies. The torsos he had cut up and burned in a furnace. The two heads he had put in a large concrete flower box, then sealed the top of the box with cement.

"Where's the flower box now?" he was asked.

"Right on my property. But it won't do you any good to look in there. I covered the heads with quick-lime; they will be destroyed by now."

But Lincoln was wrong. The heads were easily recognizable when taken from their repository and the killer convicted. Lincoln had made the mistake of dipping into a box of ordinary lime, which stood directly alongside of a box of quick-lime, and covering the heads with the harmless substance. *It later developed that a workman in the greenhouse had put the boxes back in the wrong places the day before the murder.*

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forced to submit. "All right," he growled, "but I don't like it. It's not right for a woman like you to be mixed up in this kind of business."

"That's what our bearded friend said," Mme. Storey remarked with a smile.

WE immediately embarked in a whirl of activity. All other business was dropped for the time. Suspecting that her offices might be watched, Mme. Storey established temporary headquarters in the Hotel Vandermeer. Here she rounded up her operatives and despatched them on their missions. Before the day was out there were a dozen on the case.

Each of these people was warned in plain terms of the danger attached to this assignment. "You take your life in your hands," said Mme. Storey. "If you are suspected for one moment it is all up with you." A few of them paled at the prospect; others smiled. Mme. Storey let the faint-hearted ones go with her blessing. Those that remained were all young, keen and adventurous; and each one a master of disguise.

It was after midnight before we got home to her little place on East Sixty-third Street. Crider was with us. Mme. Storey opened the big wardrobe that lined the walls of her bedroom and pulled out some dresses and coats. I saw that she was planning a disguise and my heart sunk. She got out the curly wig she had worn in her famous impersonation of Jessie Seipp.

"Surely you don't mean to go amongst the gang?" I faltered.

"Certainly I do," she said coolly. "I'm not going to send others into a danger that I refuse to face. . . . I have saved Casini for myself," she added with a smile. "Slosson said he was susceptible to the ladies. Perhaps I can attract him."

I groaned and shut my mouth. What could you do with such a woman?

Mme. Storey shares a little house near Lexington Avenue with her friend Mrs. Lysaght. It is divided into two maisonettes in the French fashion. You enter through an iron gate at the street level which gives on a brick-paved passage leading through to the yard. The front door proper opens from this passage. Mme. Storey has the two lower floors; kitchen and dining room below; bedroom and living room overhead. Her maids sleep at the top of the house.

The last thing before we went to bed Mme. Storey in order to reassure me, pointed out that the windows of the kitchen (which was in front of the house) were protected by heavy bars, and the entrance gate secured by a business-like iron bolt. The door from the passage was likewise locked. Even so I suppose I did not look any too happy, for my employer laughed and said:

"Well, anyhow you can sleep in peace tonight, my Bella. It is too soon yet for the gang to have learned what we're up to."

I slept on a divan in her bedroom and Crider was given a sofa in the dining room downstairs. My employer, healthily tired by the activities of the day was almost instantly asleep. In the still room I could hear her breathing as regularly as a child. Sleep was far from my eyes. The stillness oppressed my breast like a weight. There was no traffic through that quiet street. Through the open window I could hear the hum of the city, which never sleeps, as from far away.

In a silence so complete you are bound to imagine that you hear sounds; the stairs creak; door handles are softly turned; stealthy feet creep across the floors. A dozen times I was brought up in my bed as taut as a wire; and all for nothing at all; only to fall back trembling. Somewhere I could hear a church clock striking the quarter hours. It seemed as if half a night stretched between each fifteen minutes.

IN the end I must have fallen asleep while still dreaming I was awake. Suddenly I was shocked into real wakefulness. I sat up in bed sweating in cold terror without knowing what I had heard. There was light enough in the room for me to see Mme. Storey sitting up in her bed, so I knew she had heard it too. I instinctively threw back the covers and ran to her.

"Sh!" she whispered. "Listen!"

There was a dreadful moment filled with imaginary sounds, and then we heard real sounds; sounds of a hushed desperate struggle from the dining room.

"They're in the house!" I gasped. "How could they have got in!"

"Over the back fences I reckon," she whispered grimly.

She retained the presence of mind to slip her feet into slippers and draw a dressing gown around her. We ran to the front windows. There was a little balcony outside from which it would have been possible to drop to the street without breaking a leg. But there was a car waiting by the curb with engine running. An open car with the top down; a quiet muffled figure sitting at the wheel; another with his foot on the running board. No need to be told that these men were armed. No escape that way.

Mme. Storey picked up the telephone, and immediately put it down again. "Dead!" she muttered. "Wires cut!"

Hysteria had me in its grip. I scarcely knew what I was doing. I remember staggering to the door of the room with the idea of shooting the bolt. But Mme. Storey overtook me and thrust me aside.

"Let them come in freely," she whispered. "It's our only chance."

I was strangling for breath. I suppose I would have screamed could I have got any sounds out. My employer flung an arm protectingly around my shoulders, and clapped her free hand softly over my mouth. "Quiet! Quiet, for God's sake!" she urged. "It's our only chance of life!"

The sense of what she said reached me dimly, and I ground my teeth together in the effort to recover some self-control. She pointed across the room. "Get in the wardrobe," she whispered. "Hide behind the dresses!"

I obeyed her, but I left the door open to see what she was going to do. With a sweep she gathered up my bedclothes and thrust them under the divan. She ran to her bed and with hands that moved swifter than my eyes could follow them, did something with spare pillows and the bedclothes. She snatched up the curly wig from the table. When she left the bed I saw that she had arranged the rough semblance of a human figure under the covers with the wig sticking out at the top. She came to me in the wardrobe and closed the door. I clung to her more dead than alive.

There was a rush of feet on the stairs, the door crashed back against the wall, and instantly it seemed as if the world flew into small pieces like an exploding flywheel. Blinding, shattering explosions that stunned me. My senses could not take it in. Not until afterward did I learn that it was a burst of machine gun fire. The bed was riddled with bullets.

They ran downstairs again; the iron gate clanged shut; the car roared away down the street. When I realized that it was over, and that Mme. Storey was still safe in my arms, I just quietly passed out.

When I came to myself the bedroom was flooded with light. I was lying on the divan with Mme. Storey and Crider bending over me. Not more than a few seconds had passed. Crider was ghastly pale and there was an ugly bruise over his eye, but he was all right. I was certain that he had been killed in the dining room. When I saw him—my dear old pal who had worked with me so long—I burst into helpless weeping and could not stop.

Mme. Storey patted me soothingly. "Good old Bella!" she murmured, "always turns on the water after the fire is out!"

I commenced to laugh weakly. We all laughed.

Immediately afterward the room filled up with police, servants, neighbors, all attracted by the shots. In answer to their confused questions Mme. Storey said coolly:

"I have no idea who attacked me. Anybody in my line is bound to have enemies, of course. However, nobody was hurt except my Louis Quinze bedstead."

IN the morning we dropped Mme. Storey at the Hotel Vandermeer where she had appointments with several of her operatives, and Crider and I went on to the office. There we found the photographs waiting for us; the finger-prints and the head and bust of our mysterious visitor of the day before.

Mme. Storey had ordered several enlargements of the head made, and according to her instructions I now pasted out one of them with strips of paper, allowing only the eyes to show. Terrible eyes; the camera had caught their poisonous glitter to the life. They made me shiver with their reminder of yesterday's scene. They seemed to follow me around the room.

In about an hour Mme. Storey came in wearing the inscrutable smile that always promises excitement one way or another. "Bella," she said immediately, "I think I have our man."

"What! Already!" I cried, and stammered out a dozen questions.

Without answering any of them she said: "Let me look at the photograph." She studied it for a while and her smile broadened. "Yes, I think I have him," she said. That was all I could get out of her.

Very soon Benny Abell and John Rouse, two of our operatives, came in bringing a prisoner between them. He

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The United States of America enjoyed better health and had a lower deathrate during the year 1932 and in 1933

[up to the time this message went to press]

than ever before in its history

Keep up Momentum

WHEN you read that during many recent months, in spite of the financial depression, the American people enjoyed better health and had a lower deathrate than ever before, you may wonder why. One outstanding reason is that our people were well prepared, physically, to resist sickness.

In past decades, millions and millions of dollars were invested to prevent as well as to cure disease. They returned rich health dividends. The movement for healthier living conditions in all parts of the country had gained such momentum that temporary obstacles and difficulties failed to check its progress.

You know that the deathrate from tuberculosis has declined steadily. You know that smallpox, typhoid and diphtheria can be prevented. You hope to see the day when in this country whooping cough, measles and scarlet fever will disappear, as yellow fever and cholera did — thanks to scientific preventive methods. Scientists are faithfully working day and night for these victories.

The lower deathrate is due in no small measure to the present efficiency of hospital and nursing services that have required years in which to develop. In assuring pure water, safe milk, clean food, swept streets and proper sewerage systems your Health and Sanitation Departments did their part in making health records in 1932 and 1933.

Some of the forces upon which the health of people depends are financed by state, county and local appropriations. But many of the forces which have contributed so greatly to general welfare—the Red Cross, the Tuberculosis Associations, the Cancer Societies and others—are largely dependent upon private contributions.

Today the forward health movement has been slowed down in some localities because of reduced appropriations and smaller contributions. In certain other communities much of the official health work has stopped.

While the people of our country are working shoulder to shoulder, collectively and individually, to restore material prosperity, no greater tragedy could befall them than to sacrifice their greatest wealth — their health. If you would have increasing health and decreasing disease, keep up the power and the momentum of the health movement.

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FREDERICK H. ECKER, PRESIDENT — ONE MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

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Which Man's Eyes

(*Continued from page 94*)

was a good-looking, well-built young man, very smartly dressed. He was unknown to me. He was the same size and build as the man who had come to our office the day before, but I did not recognize him as the same. The expression of his eyes was different now. He seemed to be terrified half out of his wits.

"It's all a mistake . . all a mistake," he stammered. "I can explain everything."

My imagination had been so struck by his daring nerve the day before that I felt a contempt for his collapse. Another illusion shattered. Mme. Storey put him in the room behind her office under guard of the men who brought him in.

MEANWHILE Barron and Slosson were up at her flat viewing the damage and looking for evidence. There was no evidence except a hundred bullets or more. According to Crider's story he had been overpowered by four masked men. They had entered from the door on the yard. They must have possessed keys to that door and to the door from the passage, since neither lock had been tampered with.

The Inspector and his assistant came into our office in a great state of excitement. They had two plainclothesmen with them who waited out in the hall. The magnificent inspector was as near pale as his florid complexion would allow. He seized Mme. Storey's hand between both of his and fondled it.

"Rosika, this is terrible!" he said. "You must drop this case. You must leave town. This scoundrel has got clear away, and he will certainly try it again. You must have a proper police guard. You must leave town. Think of me a little bit, my dear. God! Machine guns! I can't stand it!"

His voice shook, he was perfectly sincere, yet there was something comic about it. To tell the truth, the softer emotions did not sit well on him. One would have thought he was about to cry. Mme. Storey led him into her office.

George Slosson was standing there looking at me strangely. Behind his glasses his eyes were burning. He came close to me and bent his head until his murmuring lips were almost brushing my cheek.

"Bella, you mustn't let her go on with this," he whispered. "If you make a stand against it, she'll give it up." His voice broke a little. "I've been in hell since I heard what happened. I can't let you be exposed to such a danger. I want you. . . . I want you. . . ."

He was a handsome man and it was terribly exciting to see him so roused. But I didn't know whether I liked it or not. I couldn't believe that he was so crazy about me as all that.

"Don't be silly," I said sharply. "At least, not during office hours."

"That's the only time you will let me see you," he grumbled.

There was a call from Barron, and he went into the next room. The burly inspector's eyes were fairly popping with excitement.

"Slosson," he cried, "Madame Storey has caught the man who threatened her yesterday!"

Slosson's face lighted up. "Good!" he cried. "I knew she would!"

Barron was not so well pleased. It went hard to have a woman beat him at his own game. "Where is he?" he asked.

"In the back room," said Mme. Storey.

"Fetch him in."

"Wait a minute," she said, "I have a mind to try out an identification first from the photograph. How many men have you got with you?"

"Two beside Slosson here."

"I have three men here. Let's put them all in the back room together. Hang a sheet in the doorway with a strip cut out of it at the height of their eyes. Then they can show us their eyes one after another."

"Good idea!" said Barron.

Our man Benny Abell took charge of the arrangements. He was a small man and his eyes were dark, so he didn't figure in the test. The others were all tall, all about of a size. They were sent into the back room; the sheet was hung and the strip cut out of it; Barron, Mme. Storey and I took our places in front. Barron had the photograph to compare with. My employer and I didn't require it.

A choking excitement took possession of me when the test began. It gives you the weirdest feelings to be shown living eyes like that, and nothing else. I had no idea that eyes were so expressive. The rest of the face helps us to conceal things; without it the eyes give everything away. Each pair that looked through the sheet seemed to reveal a naked soul.

The first pair were brown and steady. The man was told to move on. The second pair were blue but had a vacant foolish look—one of Barron's worthy flat-feet I reckoned. The third pair were dark gray; wrong color. The fourth pair were blue; right color, but they seemed to beam with good will and good humor. This man moved on, but something about him had struck Barron's attention.

"Let that fellow show himself again," he called out.

THE blue eyes returned to the hole in the sheet, but their expression had changed. Now they mantled and glittered as if there were little shooting flames inside them. They brought back the scene of the day before so vividly that I felt sick with remembered fear. A cry arose to my lips, but Mme. Storey glanced at me, and I choked it back. She wanted Barron to make the identification.

And he did. "By God, those are the eyes!" he cried in a loud voice. Striding forward, he yanked down the sheet and found himself face to face with . . . George Slosson.

Barron was knocked silly for the moment. His jaw dropped; his eyes were daft. Slosson's face was like a mask with only those glittering blue eyes alive. The other man pressed into the room.

"What does this mean. . . . What does this mean?" Barron stuttered.

"It means," said Mme. Storey dryly, "that we are dealing with the cleverest crook I have ever known. He organizes his business under a figurehead like Mike Casini while he himself digs in as a scout at police headquarters. Could anything be simpler?"

"What have you got to say for yourself?" Barron demanded of Slosson.

Slosson put on his spectacles and looked owlish and efficient again. "Nothing whatever," he answered with a cool grin.

"There is some mistake!" cried Barron. "It's ridiculous. I don't believe a word of it!"

Mme. Storey turned to me. "Can you identify him, Bella?"

MY feelings were in a mad whirl. It gave me a secret joy to discover that Slosson was a big man in his way. It justified the powerful attraction he had for me. Even at this moment when he was found out, I was drawn to him, because he kept his head up and grinned. But how thankful I was that I had never given in to him!

"That is the man who came here yesterday in disguise," I said.

"I don't believe it!" cried Barron, louder.

"Well, we have another test," said Mme. Storey. She pushed forward an inked pad and a sheet of paper on her desk. "Ink your fingers," she said to Slosson, "and let us have a set of prints."

"I refuse," said Slosson coolly.

Barron hesitated. The efficient secretary had established a powerful influence over him, you see. But the plainclothesmen were not susceptible to it. All Barron's men were jealous of Slosson. "Yeah, let's see his fingerprints," growled one of them, and Barron had to submit. With a jerk of his head he ordered Slosson to make the prints. Slosson obeyed with a grin of bravado.

Barron compared the prints with the photograph taken the previous day, and gave up. "Take him away," he growled, turning his back to Slosson.

The two plainclothesmen were only too pleased to obey. One of them without waiting for an order snapped a pair of handcuffs on Slosson's wrists. When he was led out a big piece of me seemed to be dragged with him. When all was said and done he was a man.

When everyone had gone I dropped in a chair in Mme. Storey's room shaking like an aspen leaf. The excitement had been so great that the reaction sickened me a little. I was still confused in my mind.

"That man that Benny Abell and John Rouse brought in this morning," I asked, "who was he?"

"One of my new operatives," said Mme. Storey smiling and blowing a cloud of smoke. "That was just a little comedy that we staged."

"Why did you have to deceive me?" I asked reproachfully.

"Well, you have a very open face, my dear. I was afraid it might give something away if you were in on the secret."

"What first put you on to Slosson?" I asked.

"Well, one has hunches," she said thoughtfully. "With a person who wears glasses, if you look closely you can tell roughly what is the nature of the defect in his vision, and the sort of lens he requires to correct it. I noticed some time ago that Slosson's sight was perfect and that the lenses in his glasses were nothing but clear glass. And I wondered, that's all."

TWO SKINS!

You have an Outer and an Under Skin

Do you know the Different Care that Each Skin Needs?

This TWO-SKIN TREATMENT Checks Wrinkles, Corrects Dryness

DID YOU KNOW that those little lines and wrinkles you hate so start in your *under* skin? . . . before they show in your outer skin? And there's a way to stop them from coming?

Here's how it happens:

You have an outer and an under skin. When you are young, the under skin fits the outer skin like the flesh of a ripening plum.

Then, soon something goes wrong. The tiny glands that poured out beauty oils and kept the under skin so firm and full, begin to fail. The under skin falls into little creases—those first signs of age that deepen and deepen if left uncorrected.

To *check* this condition, you must help the under skin! That is what Pond's Cold Cream is for.

An Oil Cream that Goes Deep

Pond's Cold Cream is a delicious oil-rich cream that penetrates down to the under skin! And brings it just the oils it needs. Pat it on. Your skin feels toned up right away. Because it is so light and its oils go so deep, it is a marvelous cleanser.

For the Outer Skin—a Greaseless Cream

How very different is your outer skin! This skin contains active moisture cells to guard the under skin against sun, wind, cold, dust, the dry heat of modern houses. But these elements are constantly drying out this natural moisture. Dryness, chapping result.

To correct this, use Pond's feather-light Vanishing Cream. Greaseless, this cream. You can have it on during the day. Leave it on all night. It contains a special ingredient that actually *restores* moisture to the outer skin. *One application* will remove roughnesses, relieve chapping!

THE DUCHESSE DE NEMOURS, brilliant society beauty, uses Pond's Two-Skin Treatment

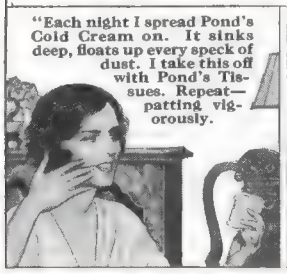
OUTER SKIN
WHERE DRYNESS STARTS

UNDER SKIN
WHERE WRINKLES START

And Pond's Vanishing Cream makes the most effective powder base.

Together these two creams give your skin complete beauty care. They supply everything that *each skin* needs. Fill out the coupon and send for generous samples. In a few days, see your own skin gain in smoothness, firmness. See the little lines fade away, magically!

Lovely MRS. MORGAN BELMONT tells how she cares for her skin



"Each night I spread Pond's Cold Cream on. It sinks deep, floats up every speck of dust. I take this off with Pond's Tissues. Repeat—patting vigorously.

"Now the magic of Pond's Vanishing Cream—so delicate. I leave that on all night. Not the faintest greasiness. Roughnesses fade away.

"Morning, and in the day, another Cold Cream cleansing. Vanishing Cream next. How smooth my skin! My make-up perfect!"

POND'S EXTRACT COMPANY, Dept. M
127 Hudson St., New York City
I enclose 6¢ (to cover postage and packing) for samples of Pond's Two Creams and new Face Powder. (Check shade): Naturelle ☐ Light Cream ☐ Rose Cream ☐ Brunette ☐ Rose Brunette ☐ Dark Brunette ☐.

Name_____

Street_____ State_____

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MAIL COUPON

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TUNE IN ON THE POND'S PLAYERS EVERY FRIDAY EVENING, 9:30 P. M., E. S. T. WEAF AND NBC NETWORK

The Doctor Sees a Ghost

(*Continued from page 42*)

through the hall and up the stairs was so slow that he offered an apology.

"Bad heart," he explained. "Have to be careful."

It was probably true, Hallowell reflected. His heart might easily be in bad shape, after pumping blood through that gross body for years. But it was not that which was slowing his feet upon the stairs. They were plainly rendered leaden by fear, and fear showed in every sagging line of his flabby figure.

When they reached the upper hall he paused, and, his hand on the knob of the door, stood listening.

From within came faint sounds: the crackle of a hearth fire, a child's voice laughing and crooning.

Again there stole over Hallowell the fantastic conviction that he had lived this before. Something was familiar, something that had to do with a song.

Pat — pat — pat—pat—a—pat. The sound of softly clapping hands.

Gessler turned around, his hands pressing back, outspread against the panels of the door. Beneath his cap of sleek, black hair his face was gray-yellow and quivering.

"I can't go in," he said. "Not tonight. I can't!"

In the end it was Hallowell who opened the door.

"WHAT'S your explanation?" Gessler demanded. They had returned to the study, and Hallowell was pouring himself a drink. A stiff one. He did not answer at once, and the other man burst out wildly: "There must be some explanation! A thing like that couldn't happen, and keep on happening—without reason. Or could it?"

"I . . . I don't know," Hallowell answered unsteadily. "I can't give an opinion offhand. I'll have to examine the child. Get more data. . . ." That was nonsense, and he knew it. He had already seen enough, and more than enough. No wonder Brandt had handed the case over to him. Brandt had spent three nights there. One was as much as he could stand. His only desire was to get out of the house as soon as possible.

But he could not leave at once, not with any human decency, certainly not until the nurse arrived, for Gessler was not fit to be left alone. The fellow was sick, really sick with fear. No wonder, with *that* going on upstairs.

"—— and yet you can't see anything," Gessler was babbling. "That's the ghastly part of it. You can't see anything! But the baby, when he's playing, *he* sees. Don't try to deny it!" (Hallowell had not tried.) "When he reaches out his arms and plays peek-a-boo, I tell you, there's *something there!*"

"Hush!" Hallowell commanded sharply, and was ashamed to realize that his purpose had not been to quiet Gessler but to stop him from continuing into heaven only knew what indecency of horror. "There's no use getting hysterical. There's some rational explanation, of course. The child probably has an abnormally retentive memory——"

"My wife died before he could talk."

"Perhaps his nurse has been teaching him."

"Then what's frightening her away?"

Hallowell was silenced. His argument had been, he knew, directed against himself rather than the other.

"If it weren't for that damned rhythm," he exclaimed irritably, "I might be able to think!"

"So you heard it, too."

"No." Hallowell was annoyed to realize that he had spoken, unconsciously, out loud. "No. I heard nothing. Absolutely nothing except the child. It's only that there's been a tune running in my head ever since I came in, something I can't quite place."

Gessler half sang, half hummed:

"J'entends le moulin tique-tique taque,

"J'entends le moulin tique-tique

"That's what you mean, isn't it?"

It was what Hallowell meant, and it explained, in part at least, what had troubled him. The haunting tune was a nursery song that he had not heard since he was a little older than the child upstairs. His nurse, an old French-Canadian, had sung it often because it was his favorite. Really it had a splendid swing.

"J'entends le moulin tique-tique taque,
J'entends le moulin taque.
Mon pere a fait batir maison,
"J'entends le moulin tique-tique taque,
L' a fait batir a trois pignons,
Tique taque, tique taque, tique taque——"

He broke off, startled to realize that he was humming aloud and that the palms of his hands were unconsciously meeting in answer to some strange compulsion.

"I haven't thought of that tune for years," he explained, a trifle sheepishly. "My nurse used to sing it when I was a child. There was a game that we played—a clapping game."

"She used to sing it to the boy," Gessler interrupted. "She sang it every night before he went to bed." The drink was taking effect, now. His speech was blurred, and his fear seemed to be giving place to a drunken bravado. "You think you heard that tune, don't you? Or that something just happened to bring it back? But you didn't hear it. Not with your ears. And if you want to know why it came into your head, I can tell you. It's because the baby was clapping to the music."

Hallowell asked in a low voice:

"What . . . what do you mean?"

"I mean that *you* couldn't hear it, and *I* couldn't; but something was singing that tune, and the baby knew. He was keeping time with his hands."

"Impossible!" Hallowell's defenses were going down. He was like a shipwrecked man in the grip of a current who sees the friendly, familiar shore grow fainter and feels himself swept into the awful unknown. Desperately he struck out with his denial. "Impossible!"

Gessler gasped.

"Nothing's impossible with *that* in the house! Spying on me. Threatening. Standing between me and the boy! Wanted to make a musician of him. To make him better than his father, so he'd look down on me, the way she did, deep inside, where she thought I wouldn't know, like she did the day she died!" He was standing now, holding himself erect by the edge of the mantel. His face was upturned to the portrait. The veins of his nose had grown purple and little knots stood out upon his temples in sharp relief.

"I told you the boy'd be brought up my way!" he screamed. "You can't come back and frighten me, see? I don't believe in you! I don't believe—"

"Stop!" Hallowell grasped his arm. "Your heart can't stand it. You'll kill yourself!"

"That's what she wants." Gessler's voice had sunk to a dry whisper; all his body slacked away from its tenseness and he drooped, his hands still clutching the mantel. "That's what she's trying to do—kill me."

Hallowell answered sharply:

"Nonsense. I tell you—" He stopped suddenly, interrupted by sounds from outside the room. There was a rush up the steps, a peremptory knock, then the bang of the outer door thrown back upon its hinges. Through the arch he could see a man in uniform running across the hall and up the stairs.

Hallowell sprang after him. Gessler followed, more slowly, clutching at the furniture and the stair rail for support.

THERE was smoke in the upper hall. It was coming from the open door of the nursery. Through the writhing mist an officer appeared carrying the sleeping child.

"Chair cover caught fire," he said curtly. "Spark from the grate. Another minute and it'd have reached the crib."

Gessler made no motion to take the child. He stood clinging to the rail. The sound of his chattering teeth was audible above his labored breathing.

Hallowell, too, made no move. He seemed bound by a spell, as though the wan white smoke which was thinly drifting about them had the power to bemuse and entrance. His mind was dark, like an unlit room in which shadowy, hideous things are lurking.

The officer looked from one to the other of them curiously.

"What I don't understand is why the lady didn't save him herself," he said.

"Lady?" Out of the corner of his eye Hallowell saw that Gessler had turned his head and was listening, with a face which was twisted and strange. "What lady?"

"Why, the lady who called from the window. The young lady with the white hair. *Catch the gentleman, sir! He's falling!*"

IF YOU PLEASE

It's an indisputable fact that proper exercises keep the figure fit and correct imperfections. You can reap the rewards if you only please to do so. To obtain exercises of the most helpful sort, send for our special exercise sheets. Write to Pamela Pinkerton, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Let the spool-end be your guide

Spools of thread may look alike. The only way you can tell that the thread is of the quality you know so well is to find the name J. & P. Coats or Clark's O. N. T. on the spool-end. Never take it for granted that you are getting Clark's or Coats Best Six Cord unless the spool-end tells you so. That's the one safe guide to the thread you set out to get—the thread that you, and your mother and grandmother before you, have found always dependable. Look at the spool-end. It pays to use good thread.

J. & P. COATS · CLARK'S O. N. T.

For more than a century—as today

THE TWO GREAT NAMES IN THREAD

Pajamas, Diamonds and Blackmail

(*Continued from page 34*)

"Information?" She eyed him, now keenly on the alert. "About what?"

"About you, my dear. Remember, I do not blame you! It was with the greatest distaste that I resolved to broach the subject. Only after your maid Felice made the statement——"

"Felice!" Marian Bellew started slightly. "What are you talking about, Ivan? If you have anything to say, then say it and be on your way!"

"Very well." Prince Ivan produced a number of papers and regarded them. "Copies of sworn statements of Felice in regard to your—ah—your amusements! You have received a certain gentleman here in your suite, in your bedroom. Felice has seen him here often, has admitted him more than once, has seen him leave in the morning. A gentleman whom we both knew quite well in France, and who evidently came here with you. Monsieur de Seyzon."

WHITE as death, the girl came out of her chair, then sank back again. Only with an effort did she choke back her flaming anger and indignation, and retain some semblance of poise.

"Oh," she gasped. "Pierre de Seyzon—that gutter-rat, that gigolo, that creature of yours—why, how dare you utter such infamous lies about me? So you have bribed Felice to back them up, have you? It will do you no good——"

"When the newspapers get these," and smiling thinly, Prince Ivan tapped the papers he had laid on the table, "with proof to back them up, you know what will happen?"

The girl bit her lip. Ivan did not miss the flicker of terror in her eyes.

"You would demean yourself to the level of a yellow-journal columnist, of a madly jealous woman, of a street-walker!" she said with icy contempt. "You would stoop even to this—to utter baseless lies, that an honest name might share the dirt surrounding your own!"

"Not at all, unless you force me, my dear," said the prince suavely.

"Do it, then!" flashed the girl. "Do it, and be damned! I'll fight you! Not a soul will believe such things! There is no atom of proof."

"No?" The smile of Prince Ivan checked her words, held her staring, wondering, half terrified, as the gaze of a reptile holds a bird powerless.

His brother Jean opened the volume in his lap. It was not a book, but a box; from it came a tiny Leica camera. At this moment, the curtain of the bedroom door was pulled aside and a man appeared there, looking at the scene in sleepy astonishment. A dapper, sleek, dark young man in elegant pajamas, who stood motionless behind Marian Bellew, while Jean snapped picture after picture.

The girl glanced around, uttered one sharp cry—but her voice was drowned in a raging torrent of French from her husband. Prince Ivan whipped a pistol from his pocket, covered the figure in pajamas, and, convulsed with anger, heaped him with insults.

"Hands up—up! You unspeakable dog, Seyzon—you who called yourself my friend! Out of that doorway—step over here to the table! Quick! In the very bedroom of my wife, eh?"

In apparent terror, Seyzon obeyed the command and moved forward to the table. Then Prince Ivan, waving his pistol, edged around to the curtained bedroom doorway and stood there, his brother Jean calmly snapping another picture.

"By all the rules of honor, I should shoot you both!" stormed the prince in terrible passion. Marian Bellew, shrinking back, was only dimly comprehending the comedy being enacted, or with what neatness she was being put on the spot. Realization brought a startled cry from her trembling lips.

"A camera—oh! You scoundrels! You scoundrels—it's all a plot!"

"Why, yes," spoke up Jean, with an amused laugh. "Excellent photographs; the newspapers will be so glad to get them. Still, brother Ivan, I suggest that you let your virtuous anger be appeased. M. de Seyzon, perhaps, would be glad to pay the small sum of fifty thousand dollars to escape the vengeance of an injured husband—eh?"

"Me!" cried Seyzon. "But I have no money, except what Madame here allows me——"

The girl turned. Her hand flew out—and Seyzon staggered under the slap. It knocked him backward. He fetched up against the far wall, and caught at the telephone table for support, blood trickling from his lips.

Prince Ivan laughed. "Well, Marian? Fifty thousand—yes or no?"

Then, abruptly, something happened that held all four of them spellbound.

BEHIND Prince Ivan the heavy curtains moved. A hand darted forward and tore the pistol from his grip. In the doorway, another pistol covering those before him, stood a tall, slim figure in evening dress. A silk handkerchief was knotted about the face; above it, two icy, deadly gray eyes surveyed the four staring occupants of the room.

"Hands up, everyone! Stand quiet!" The voice came like a whiplash. "That's right. You by the door, come over to the center table. Swiftly!"

The girl's eyes widened, for Riley Dillon was speaking French.

Jean, scowling but helpless, came forward. At Dillon's order, he laid down the box which again contained the candid camera, and beside it put his money and jewelry. The icy gray eyes over the pistol brought sullen fear to his vicious features.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

This month's circulars described on page 55 give menus and recipes for the best of all possible Christmas dinners—with help in planning other meals during the holiday week. You'll want a set for yourself and a number of other copies to send your friends. Send ten cents for each set to Rita Calhoun, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

"Next, big fellow," snapped Dillon, giving Prince Ivan a shove. "Quick, you species of a cabbage, or I'll blow your heart out! So you have the audacity to interfere with your wife's love affairs, eh? Put your money on the table. I heard everything. Here, you in the pajamas! Are you the lover of this lady?"

Stupefaction held Marian Bellew spellbound at these words.

"But, yes, m'sieu," stammered Seyzon, and smirked. "But, yes, it is true——"

"And this big rascal, her husband, was threatening to kill you, eh?"

"It is so, M'sieur. A violent man, this one."

"VERY well." Riley Dillon stepped forward swiftly to the table. He scooped up the money and jewelry, caught up the papers, put the camera under his arm. Then, with a flourish he laid down his own pistol, and stepped back.

"There, my friend!" he exclaimed gaily. "You see that pistol—a forty-five! Take it quickly. Shoot this scoundrel of a husband! I give you his life. Shoot him! Give the interfering rascal a lesson—"

Seyzon hesitated, not daring to move. But Prince Ivan, who had edged closer to the table, suddenly swooped like a hawk. He caught up the pistol, whipped around, and flung it up, with murder in his face.

"Take it, you dog!" he cried out, and pressed the trigger—again and again.

As the weapon clicked, Riley Dillon burst into laughter, then swung up the pistol he had taken from the prince!

"Never carry a loaded pistol, Ivan!" he exclaimed cheerfully. "Drop it! That's right. Let this be a lesson to you. A nice little frame-up, eh? And Felice is waiting for you downstairs, eh? Well, let us end this comedy. You'll be a sweet gang to put behind the bars! Attempted extortion, blackmail, I don't know what all!"

The two princely brethern stood white-faced, desperate, cornered. Upon them all had burst the truth—that this masked robber had been playing with them. Only Seyzon, still standing against the wall, moved a little, and no one observed the motion. Not even Dillon, who counted this man quite harmless, saw the telephone fall.

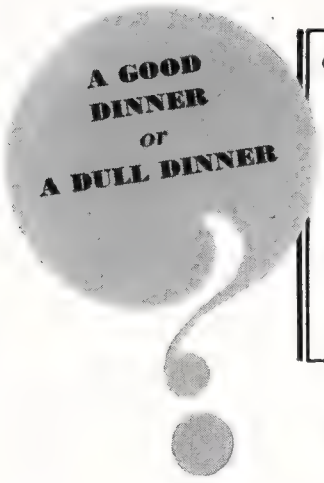
"So blackmail turns to burglary, eh?" His gay voice leaped out upon the silence. "You, Ivan, back beside your brother—and keep your hands up! Seyzon, you join them—move, you cur! That's right. Here, Madame, take this."

He deftly tossed the box and camera at the astonished girl. She caught it, and Riley Dillon chuckled. With his free hand, he put the folded papers on an ash-receiver, fumbled for a match, lit it, and touched it to the papers.

"Now, Madame!" he exclaimed, "Open that camera and take out the films. Don't damage the camera; it cost a lot of money, and I expect to keep it myself. That's right. Put the films here with the papers—they'll burn more quickly. Right. Now, if you please—"

He took the camera and box from her; met her sparkling eyes with another laugh, and waved the pistol. The papers were burning merrily.

(*Please turn to page 102*)



What are you going to have for dinner TONIGHT?

Meals are better and easier to get if you have a Recipe Library

It isn't a bit harder. It isn't any more expensive. It's just as easy to have a really good dinner that everyone will enjoy as it is to prepare a dull, unappetizing meal — if you have your Recipe Library for new menus and recipes.

Below are listed cooking bulletins prepared by Tower Magazines. Dozens of excellent recipes to make meals zestful. Menus that are correctly balanced. These recipe bulletins are all the same size so you can bind them together for easy reference. Check the ones you want and start your Recipe Library right now.

☐ Favorite Company Dinner Menus—10¢

Menus, simple and elaborate, but the kind you'd always be proud to serve . . . first course dishes . . . meat recipes . . . vegetables . . . salads . . . cakes and pies with a company manner . . . popular frozen desserts.

☐ Fruit Recipes—10¢

Fruits for breakfast in ways you'd never suspect . . . fruit dishes children like . . . fruit with meat . . . fruit salads . . . shortcakes and muffins . . . fruit pies . . . beverages . . . food value of fruits.

☐ Menus for Two—10¢

Well-balanced menus and appetizing recipes that simplify cooking for a small family . . . food budget for two . . . how to order . . . what utensils you need.

☐ Menus for Three Weeks—10¢

Not a menu to plan for three weeks! They're all worked out for you. Rules for reducing and gaining . . . feeding children . . . non-acid and special diets . . . recipes.

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Delicious layer cakes . . . small cakes and cookies . . . favorite pies . . . ten gelatine desserts . . . inexpensive puddings . . . ice-box cakes . . . ways to use ice cream . . . ten favorite desserts . . . 100-calory portions in desserts.

☐ Refreshment Menus—10¢

Menus and recipes for one and two-course party refreshments . . . beverages . . . party sandwiches and canapes . . . home-made pastries . . . party plans.

☐ Foods That Men Prefer—10¢

Breakfast breads . . . meat and meat substitutes . . . vegetables . . . pies and pastries . . . puddings and simple desserts . . . cakes . . . confections . . . menus.

☐ Meat At Any Price—10¢

Recipes for all kinds of meat . . . ways of cooking cheaper cuts . . . list of low cost cuts . . . ways of using left-over meats . . . making the most of a little meat . . . using canned meats.

☐ Healthful Diet for Children—10¢

Nursery and kindergarten menus . . . diets for grammar school age . . . high school diet . . . height and weight tables . . . school box lunches . . . menus.

☐ Bread and Cereal Dishes—10¢

Muffins and breakfast breads . . . macaroni and spaghetti . . . left-over bread dishes . . . rice cookery . . . bran recipes . . . variety with breakfast cereal . . . griddle cakes and waffles . . . favorite cereal puddings.

Use The Coupon Below To Start Your Recipe Library

Rita Calhoun,
TOWER MAGAZINES, INC.
55 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Please send me the food circulars I have checked above for my Recipe Library. I am enclosing 10c for each one I want.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

All of one mind

when it comes to a Laxative

IT used to be different! Big brother Bill, the athlete, had his "pet" laxative—and it was powerful stuff!... Dad had his... mother had hers . . . and the youngsters theirs.

But one by one the family began dipping into the little blue box of Ex-Lax. Now it's the family laxative!

Bill found that even for a big he-man, Ex-Lax was just as effective as the violent purgative he used to take.

Dad thought a little piece of chocolate was just a new-fangled idea. Now he knows different!

Mother—well, *she* realized the importance of mildness in a laxative for women.

And as for the kiddies—how they love chocolate!

All ages like a laxative that is pleasant and gentle. And Ex-Lax is just like a bit of delicious chocolate. Yet no bitter-tasting purgative was ever more effective.

So the next time *any* member of your family has to "take something"—give them Ex-Lax!

At all druggists, 10c and 25c. For free sample, write Ex-Lax, Inc., Dept. B123, Box 170, Times Plaza Station, Brooklyn, N. Y.

keep "regular" with

EX-LAX

THE CHOCOLATED LAXATIVE

Pajamas, Diamonds and Blackmail

(*Continued from page* 100)

"Well, Madame? Do you want to prefer charges against these three—conspiracy and extortion?"

"No, no!" she exclaimed quickly. "I want no publicity, please! Let them go."

"Then let 'em go, pajamas and all! The evidence against you is destroyed, and—"

A heavy knock at the door. Then it was seized and flung open. Two house detectives stood there.

"What's going on up here?" began one. "Didn't know the phone was down, huh? Holy smoke! It's a stick-up—"

Only too well aware of his danger, Riley Dillon moved in a flash. He was behind the curtain, swinging the bedroom door shut. A pistol roared, the bullet splintered the wood beside his face. He turned the key in the lock.

With a leap, he was through into the connecting bedroom, darting to the door that opened on the corridor. A moment later, the handkerchief gone from about his face, he was sauntering down the hall to the elevator, holding under his arm a perfectly innocent book.

Back in his own room, he examined the camera with much appreciation. Then took the load and clip from the automatic pistol and dropped it in a drawer.

"Which closes the unpleasant incident," he observed, selecting a cigar and lighting it with his accustomed care. "And I am, it appears, the chief loser—since I forgot to collect my payment from the lady. Now that she knows what the ring is, she will probably keep it in spite of hell or high water."

He was confirmed in this opinion when, upon rising in the morning, he put in a call for Marian Bellew's suite. The desk clerk informed him that Miss Bellew had checked out.

Riley Dillon went down to breakfast, and paused at the desk for his mail. Among it was a small parcel that had been left for him. He opened it at the breakfast table, and from a box took a ring of ancient worn gold, set with a diamond heart—the ring and the heart became two, under the twist of his fingers. He stared at it in delight, whistled softly, then seized the box and examined it.

But there was no message.

Jewel Jugglers

(*Continued from page* 49)

ship for Europe. Three weeks afterward, he landed again in New York; his luggage proving non-dutiable. This, despite the fact that he had not traveled second class, as had Lois; but in a de luxe cabin on the Ile de France.

It must have been a highly desirable cabin; for, even before the boat landed in New York, it was pre-empted for the next east-bound voyage. It was taken by a pretty little married woman who said it was the same cabin she and her husband had occupied on their wedding tour, a year earlier, and that she loved it.

She would have none other, for her contemplated trip to Paris where she was to meet this same husband. She was willing to pay a premium, if necessary, to secure it. As it was during the slack season, there was no premium to pay; and the clerk at the steamship office was touched at her evidence of wifely adoration. Of his own accord—he was just about to be married, himself, to the girl of his heart—he shifted a passenger to whom the cabin had been assigned; and arranged for the pretty little bride to have it.

He even sent a line to the ship's purser, bespeaking pleasant treatment for her.

This recommendation, alas, proved useless. For the following reason:

The Ile de France was to sail at 11 P. M. At 10 P. M., the pretty passenger came aboard. She made inquiries of her room steward and stewardess and of practically everyone else, as to whether or not her luggage had arrived. It had not. There were advance tips. There was much futile search.

Meanwhile, the fair passenger, and her lean-faced brother who had come to see her off, were shut together in the cabin for fifteen minutes during the room steward's quest for her belongings.

Dirck and Lois made swift and clever use of those fifteen minutes.

With an adjustable clamp, Harrod unscrewed the eight hollow brass balls which topped the four corners of each of the stateroom's two beds. From them he drew canton flannel bags which bulged irregularly. These he stuffed into his pockets; then re-screwing the eight brass balls into place.

The bags contained nearly $300,000 worth of set stones.

When the room steward came back in response to a frantic ringing of the bell, and reported that no trace could be found of the missing luggage, Lois burst into hysterical tears. She demanded that her brother hurry ashore and telephone her apartment; and that he then telephone to the express company which had promised solemnly that all her trunks and bags should be aboard by noon.

On second thought, she decided to go to the pier phones with him, and to save time by calling up the apartment while he was telephoning the express people. Off the gangplank and onto the crowded pier they bustled.

Apparently they telephoned so long and so often and to such little effect that when the boat sailed they had not yet got back.

But in Dirck's pockets sagged the eight canton flannel bags of jewelry which so carefully he had deposited in the brass bedknobs during his own homecoming journey a few days earlier.

Lois's second-class trip and his de luxe voyage had given the marital-and-business partners something close to $500,000 in set and unset gems. As they had made the venture on their own capital, their twenty per cent net profit was not far from $100,000;—a venture rendered safe by the timely compound fracture of Chief Inspector Crolius's right leg.

"THE average law-puncturer," Dirck Harrod philosophized "and the average trapeze performer, have one thing in common; one thing that

smashes them both, soon or late. They let themselves get careless."

"That's the horrible part of it all!" broke in Lois, unhappily, her big eyes sick with sudden trouble. "That's what tears my nerves to ribbons when I let myself think of it. And it's with me, day and night."

"What is, little sweetheart? I don't understand——"

"This need to be 'on guard every instant';—never to relax, never to let one's self go. Always to be tense, always on the lookout against blundering. At first it was fun. It exhilarated me. Now, sometimes I feel I can't stand it any longer."

"It's only a little while longer, at most," Harrod soothed her. "Then, when we've finished this program we've mapped out so carefully—when we've won the big stake we set for ourselves—you can have all the rest of your life to be careless in and to forget you ever had to keep on guard. Oh, I know how rotten it all is for you! And that makes it rotten for me who loves you. But we're moving steadily all the time, toward the goal. Then we'll have enough to keep us cozy forever."

"I'm sorry, Dirck," she said, her brief mood of bitter revolt passing. "I won't get silly again. It's only when I get thinking how gorgeously lucky most people are—and they don't even know how happy they are! People who can plug along at any work, from chambermaid to prima donna, without being in worse danger than of losing their jobs. The law can't touch them. The law doesn't even know they're on earth. In fact, the law is ready to be their friend, if ever they get into bad luck. But the law is waiting every minute to lay you and me by the heels. It isn't just 'waiting' to do it, either. It's working to do it. And some day Crolius—"

"And some day we can forget there's such a bogey as the law, dear girl. That's what we're working toward. Always keep your eye on the ball. Not on the sandtraps. Besides, our next stunt is danger-proof. It's safer than anything we've done yet."

"They're all safe," rejoined Lois, with forced lightness, "till we're caught."

But what they didn't know, which would have caused them more concern, was that Crolius had one more slight clue to their identity. His outburst to Inspector Rabinowitz had so electrified the latter that he was on the alert every moment of the time. Rabinowitz had been on the dock the night the Ile de France had sailed on a special assignment and had seen Lois and Dirck as they left the pier. He had a genius for description and the identification he excitedly gave Crolius over the telephone made his chief exclaim,

"That's the same woman who threw ink all over my new coat!"

(*To be continued next month*)

MONEY TO SPEND

If you want to use your income to best advantage you should know what proportion to spend for food, shelter, clothing, savings, etc. The Tower Budget Circular gives explicit help in arranging your own personal budget. To obtain a copy send your request to MARY MARSHALL, Mystery Magazine, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., enclosing three cents for postage.

The story of the lady who went away *and scampered right back*

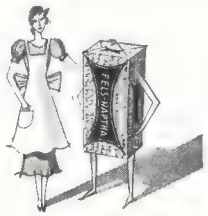
"I'M smarter than you," a neighbor bragged to Mrs. Scudder one day. "I get more soap for my money."

That's what started the trouble. Mrs. Scudder gave up Fels-Naptha—and did she regret it! She couldn't get her clothes nice and white the way she liked them. She missed the fresh sweetness they used to have.

"That's a poor way to save," said Mrs. Scudder. "It's wiser to get *extra* help with the wash than it is to get 'more bars.' I'm going right back to Fels-Naptha Soap!"

If you yourself have been tempted to

and here's the moral



"pinch" on soap quality—get reckless just once. Spend the few added pennies that Fels-Naptha costs. And see what a difference its *extra* help makes.

Quicker washes. Easier washes. No hard rubbing. No trace of "left-over dirt" to dim and dull your clothes. For Fels-Naptha brings two helpers to the job—good golden soap and *plenty* of naptha.

Together, they loosen the stubbornest grime. Every last bit of dirt slips out. Your clothes are so clean they're garden-fresh and snowy.

Use Fels-Naptha Soap in tub or machine—in hot, lukewarm or cool water. Soak or boil clothes with it. And if you like the sort of wash you're tempted to bury your face in, you too will say "never again" to anything except Fels-Naptha.

NRA

© 1933, FELS & CO.

FELS & COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa. T.M.-12-33

Some women, I understand, find it a bit easier to chip Fels-Naptha into tub or machine by using one of your handy chippers instead of just an ordinary kitchen knife. I'd like to try the chipper, so I enclose 3¢ in stamps to help cover postage. Send the sample bar, too.

Name_____

Street_____

City_____ State_____

(Please print name and address completely)

"Your woolies always look so grand, Kay. Does Ivory Snow make a difference?"

Hand-knit sweater by Mrs. Franklin, Inc.

"Indeed it does. Using a soap that only half-dissolves is silly when you can get an instant soap like Ivory Snow. Sit down, Susy, and learn how to wash that $15 sweater of yours."

fluffy Ivory Snow keeps fluffy woolens fluffy

How to wash a sweater

1. Lay sweater on paper and cut or draw outline to show size.

2. Then, make a generous lukewarm Ivory suds. You can safely use enough SNOW to make rich, big, fluffy suds because Ivory Snow is pure Ivory Soap and won't hurt colors any more than pure water.

3. Don't rub. A big fluffy Ivory Snow suds saves rubbing. Cup the sweater in your hands and squeeze suds through. Two sudsings are better than one.

4. Rinse in 3 lukewarm waters of the same temperature as your Snow suds. Lukewarm, mind you, *not* warm. Ivory Snow suds rinse out easily. Roll sweater in a towel for 5 minutes.

5. Lay sweater on your paper pattern and pull back gently to size. Dry it flat away from heat.

You'll thank Ivory Snow for being so pure, so quick-dissolving, so easy to rinse, when you see your CLEAN, LOVELY, FLUFFY SWEATER!

99 44/100 % PURE

What Is Wrong With Justice?

(*Continued from page* 23)

operate to raise an inference of guilt in the jurors' minds. This rule, based on the sound principle that a man may not be compelled to incriminate himself, is practically useless simply because it cannot work. Obviously, if the defendant remains mute the jury will believe that he has no worth-while defense to offer. You and I would think the same.

Yet in some cases the defendant, because of fear or upon his attorney's advice, does not take the witness stand. The law provides that if he does not, the district attorney must not comment on his failure to testify. Obviously, though, this deprives the prosecutor of an advantage, and in many ways he seeks unlawfully to stress the defendant's silence upon the jury's minds. Here is a typical instance in a murder case.

A husband was accused of killing his wife. The defendant's young son, who was said to be the only eye-witness to the alleged murder, had been put on the stand by the prosecutor, but the defendant still did not testify. Remember, the district attorney was forbidden by law to comment on this; to speak of it would be to break the rules and take unfair advantage. But rules of fairness apparently mean nothing to district attorneys and this one was no exception.

> "I call your attention to the fact that Thomas Burgess' (the son's) testimony has been absolutely uncontradicted. Now, you know that, and you must be aware of the fact that if there was anything about what Thomas Burgess stated that was not true, there was a way to contradict his testimony."

The District Attorney stated the above in addressing the jury at the end of the case. And, again:

> "You have a duty to perform, you know. You cannot perform it conscientiously if you are going to brush aside testimony which is absolutely uncontradicted."

Of course, the only way to contradict the testimony was for the defendant to take the stand and the district attorney could hardly have stressed more strongly his failure to do so.

The district attorney's job is to present as clearly as possible the evidence gathered by the State relating to the crime. He must not go beyond the crime for which the defendant is being tried and he must stick to the facts. That is, these are the rules of the game and he must stick by them if he is to be fair. The usual district attorney, however, does all in his power to create color, atmosphere, prejudice, to paint the defendant a blackguard and to stigmatize all those connected with him. He does this by various means, some of them brazen, some subtle, and by the practice of this art he sways the jury, not by the logic of his case, but by emotion in defiance of the very law which creates his office.

A favorite device is to call on the defendant in a loud tone of voice before the jury, to produce incriminating papers, even though the district attorney knows that no such papers exist.

What Is Wrong With Justice?

Another method, especially in weak cases, is to drag in an alleged association of the defendant with criminals.

In one case a young Italian was tried for being connected with the kidnaping of a boy. The district attorney had little evidence, but he showed that the defendant's sister was friendly with certain others who were known to have actually done the kidnaping and that she apparently had been a party to another abduction. He also showed that a stick of dynamite was found in the defendant's room soon after the kidnaping. Of course the young Italian was convicted, but almost entirely on evidence which had nothing to do with the crime.

In the famous case of Becker who was tried for complicity in the murder of Herman Rosenthal, Becker was tried twice before he was convicted. The first conviction was reversed because he did not have a fair trial. One reason for the reversal was that the district attorney repeatedly referred to Becker as a grafter and a blackmailer in matters not connected with Rosenthal's murder. If you happen to feel about Becker as I do and as the jury no doubt did, even before entering the jury box—if you feel that he was despicable and deserved punishment, whether or not he instigated Rosenthal's killing, and if you imagine yourself a juror in his case, you can readily see how your prejudice against him would be fanned by the story of the graft and the blackmail told by the district attorney.

In still another case, the district attorney tried to make the jury believe that the defendant had committed two murders of which the district attorney himself knew that the defendant had been acquitted!

It is almost as effective to blacken the character of the defendant's associates and not even the defendant's lawyer is immune from unwarranted attacks.

Imagine the reaction of the jury who listen to this speech about the defendant's lawyer by the district attorney:

> "I said that the evidence as developed in this case shows and will justify the reputation which he has got of fixing witnesses, and that I had heard that within three years he had tried to shake off the reputation which he had of fixing witnesses and sometimes, jurors."

EVEN evidence is sometimes suppressed, evidence which contradicts the testimony elicited by the prosecutor. I am thinking especially of cases where this evidence is known only by the prosecutor and where the prosecutor knows that the defendant has no chance of getting it. Is it not inhuman to think that a district attorney, simply in order to win a case, will send a defendant to his death when he knows that evidence in his possession would probably free him.

A youthful fiance was accused of murdering his sweetheart. Shortly before the murder their engagement had been broken. An important point in the case was whether the murdered girl or the defendant was the one who had broken the engagement. The district attorney put in evidence a postal card

(*Please turn to page* 106)

The Smartest Women Use FAOEN BEAUTY AIDS

— *yet they cost*
ONLY 10¢

A wave of *common-sense* buying is sweeping the country! In beauty-aids, for example, thousands and thousands of America's smartest women are turning to Faoen. They have learned this startling fact, revealed by the scientific report of a famous Research Laboratory:—"every Faoen Beauty Aid tested, is as *pure* and *fine* as products of like nature sold for $1 or more." Yet Faoen Lip Stick, Rouge or Face Powder do not cost $1 or more—*they cost but 10¢ each* in convenient sizes. It's sensible, it's smart, to use Faoen!

FAOEN PERFUMES, No. 3, 12 and 19, are captivating odeurs that have the long-lasting quality of expensive imported perfumes

● CLEANSING CREAM • COLD CREAM
FACE POWDER • ROUGES • PERFUMES

PARK & TILFORD'S
FAOEN
(FAY-ON)
Beauty Aids

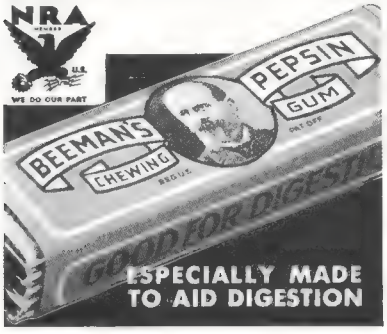
10¢ each at
F. W. Woolworth Co Stores

sign here!

And the president signs for the million dollar order! You feel equal to anything when your digestion is good. But often it isn't quite perfect — yet you don't know just what's wrong. Just something cramping your style.

That's why so many chew Beeman's *regularly.* It helps prevent that bit of indigestion which may ruin your day, and the flavor is delicious.

Chew
BEEMAN'S
PEPSIN GUM



What Is Wrong With Justice?

(*Continued from page* 105)

which he said was written by the girl. According to the postal it was the girl who broke the engagement. Therefore, the fiance was shown to have had a motive for the killing. On the strength of this he was sentenced to be electrocuted, but it later appeared that after the postal had been put in evidence *an entirely different girl had confessed to the district attorney that she was the one who wrote it—yet he hid this from the court and would have allowed the boy to go to his death.*

We have seen that the defendant is not compelled to take the stand. Yet suppose he does and arrives at his ordeal of cross examination. Under our enlightened system the district attorney may force the defendant to testify to any previous convictions. He is allowed to do this *only* to attack the defendant's credibility, but his usual, though illegal purpose, is to make him a scoundrel in the eyes of the jury and to inflame their passions against him.

Recently I was drawn into an attempt to save the life of a negro, John Collins, awaiting execution in Sing Sing. Collins had been convicted of stabbing a man to death in a miserable speakeasy in the lowest slums of Harlem. He had pleaded self-defense. The victim was a member of a gang which for months had made violent and unceasing attempts on Collins' life. The night before the murder, a girl named Mary Taylor had been thrown out of the speakeasy for using vile epithets. Her language was indeed filthy. At every opportunity during the trial the prosecuting attorney had dragged in this language.

She had threatened to come back to the speakeasy the following day with her own gang (though in fact she had none), to put on the spot the man who threw her out. Her threat was made in drunkenness. She testified that she had no recollection of making it. The next day, walking casually along the street, she met Collins and another man named Johnson. They went in search of a drink and after having tried several other places finally wound up at the speakeasy of the night before. They were let in by the man who had thrown Mary Taylor out the night before. No attempt was made to harm him.

One entered the speakeasy through the kitchen. The rest of the resort consisted of a dining room and bedroom. In the dining room, seated at the table, was Sam Wilson. According to the people's witness, Collins, Mary Taylor and Johnson went into the dining room, Johnson holding behind his back a knife. He plucked Collins by the sleeve, took him out into the kitchen, told Collins that Wilson was one of the gang that had been trying to put Collins out of the way, and passed Collins his knife, whereupon Collins gave Johnson a revolver. Going back into the dining room, Collins strode over to Wilson and knifed him to death while Johnson stood in the doorway brandishing the revolver, threatening to shoot any person who might try to leave. After the stabbing began, Mary Taylor suddenly and miraculously produced a knife and shouted to Collins: "Finish him up!"

The killing done, Collins, Johnson and Mary Taylor fled. Johnson "fled" to his bed where he was found an hour later by an officer. Mary Taylor, with the taint of murder hot upon her, "fled" to a street corner two blocks away where she loitered in plain sight until she was arrested several hours later. Collins "fled" to his home where he made no attempt to conceal himself. He, too, was arrested, but only after several weeks.

The people's principal witnesses were two negroes, inhabitants of the speakeasy, friends of the deceased, and therefore prejudiced. They kept house there and there they had their meals. One of them testified, to forestall the story of the defense, which was that Wilson had seized a knife lying in the kitchen and attacked Collins, that there was not a single knife in the whole establishment! Furthermore, their diet was rice, potatoes and other soft foods, including bread bought only *sliced* at the bakery! All this was to prove that they had no need for a knife, at any time!

Johnson and Mary Taylor testified that they remembered nothing except that there had been a row, that they were drunk when the killing occurred. Collins, however, testified that Wilson *had* attacked him, *had* picked up a bread knife and lunged at him, whereupon Collins pulled forth his own pocket-knife and defended himself until he could get to the door and leave the apartment. He didn't even know Wilson's wounds were fatal. The probability of the truth of his story was borne out by the position of the cuts on Wilson, cuts which could hardly have been made by a man standing over his victim who was sitting down.

But Collins had a previous record and this the district attorney, under the guise of attacking Collins' credibility, brought out in all its detail. Johnson had no previous record nor had Mary Taylor. The jury's verdict was murder in the first degree against Collins and Mary Taylor, and manslaughter in the second degree against Johnson, an amazing result. That is, it was amazing until I talked to some of the jurors and then I discovered the reason why two had received the extreme verdict while the third, the instigator and participant, was afforded leniency. With one accord the jurors maintained that the verdict was correct as to Collins because he was a vicious man, had had a record. Furthermore they felt themselves justified when they discovered a week after the trial that Collins had been tried, though acquitted, for another murder. "See," they said, "he must have committed this murder because he was once accused of another."

Mary Taylor, too, was vile. She had used filthy epithets and had made violent threats. Plainly she deserved to be put out of the way. Against her their emotions were aroused. By her past actions she had proved herself to be a bad woman. No matter if the evidence as to her participation in this affair was slight. She must have had more to do with it even than the People's witness had declared. "Certainly," one juror said, "certainly she must have been the instigator, not Johnson," even though there was no evidence to that effect.

Johnson had no previous record. He used no vile language. He was too ignorant and weak-minded to arouse feelings of passions and revenge in the jurors' minds, and so he therefore re-

What Is Wrong With Justice?

ceived the smallest possible punishment.

Mary Taylor's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by the Governor, but to my mind Collins went to his death, as he did, largely because the district attorney was permitted to bring out the story of his past record and thereby inflame the jurors' minds. And even if he was guilty, he did not have a fair trial.

Collins is not the only defendant who has suffered from the cruelty of this rule of evidence. It is used continually by district attorneys and it probably rarely fails to accomplish the actual purpose in the district attorney's mind.

Perhaps it is not surprising that prosecutors in their zeal should flout the rules of justice, but they are not the sole offenders. Even judges do their part in inflicting wrongful punishment and disregarding the law.

Next month we will see how persons sometimes go to jail and even to their death, not because of their own acts, but because of what the judge has said and done!

Murder Men of Molokai

(*Continued from page* 39)

hers when she opened her eyes. Momentarily confused, she looked at him dully before she pushed him away. Then she looked down at her torn dress . . . at her bare shoulder, and flushed.

"I'm sorry it happened," he said, awkwardly, as he got to his feet. "When that woman of yours gets here I'll dress it for you."

She gazed at him steadily as if he didn't exist, and in tones so low that he scarcely heard, she said:

"You'll do nothing for me—except get out of my sight!"

For a minute he stared down at his feet; then with a shrug started for the door. Half way there he stopped and turned.

"Say," he said, "you don't believe that stuff the dago told you—do you?"

"Why not?" she said with compressed lips.

He gazed back at her incredulously; then his brows knitted with mingled anger and impatience.

"Hells bells!" he exploded. "I've loved brown girls . . . yellow girls . . . and white girls. I've loved good ones and bad ones. But they were all smart . . . this is the first time that I've fallen for a dumb one!"

The house rocked with the sound of the door closing behind him.

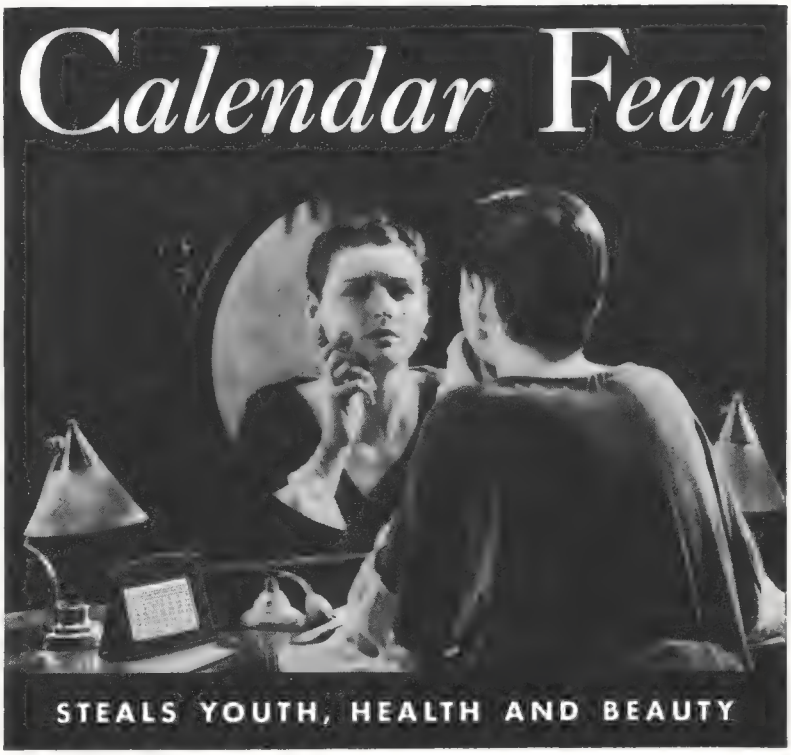
MR. GRAVES sat in his office. Inspector Lawrence McNeil was there, reporting his discoveries at the Sailor's Nook.

"There's no doubt about it," said McNeil, obstinately, "that it was the work of Chinamen. Why, Mr. Graves, you could smell them! The Musk brothers' room just reeked with incense."

"Incense! Nonsense!" said Mr. Graves, not averse to making a feeble joke. "What other evidence have you?"

"Outside of a statement from the proprietor—a fellow called 'Lefty'—nothing much," the inspector admitted, "unless you count three glasses and

(*Please turn to page* 108)



CALENDAR FEAR first preys upon the mind . . . then upon the body. The periodic worry of a lapse in normal feminine routine often brings on the very break which is so dreaded . . . To the average married woman this means constant tension . . . fading eagerness and youth.

But today, this threat to woman's charm and happiness can find victims only among the timid, the ignorant and careless . . . For the modern wife can learn from trustworthy authority the truth about marriage hygiene . . . She now practices correct feminine antisepsis, as long advised by the world's leading physicians, hospitals and clinics . . . She uses "Lysol" disinfectant regularly and intelligently.

"Lysol" is safe because it is *mild* . . . It contains no free caustic alkali to deaden sensitive membranes or injure tender tissues . . . as other antiseptics do. "Lysol" is used in delicate childbirth operations, when feminine tissues are most sensitive. Surely then it is mild and gentle for regular use on these same tissues.

"Lysol" is dependable because it is *effective*. It destroys germ-life even in the presence of organic matter. Undependable compounds lose 95% of their strength in similar practical use.

Take these two decisive steps to banish womanly worries from your home.

1. Use "Lysol" according to its easy-to-follow directions. Your druggist recommends "Lysol." Your doctor approves it.

2. Write for the new "Lysol" booklet, "Marriage Hygiene." You will appreciate its free professional advice by three famous women doctors. Fill out the convenient coupon now.

Let "Lysol" Guard the Family's Health

Use it in your home as protection against colds, tonsilitis, sore throat, grippe, and to disinfect after these ailments. Use it for protection and disinfection in case of children's diseases—mumps, measles, etc. Excellent for athlete's foot. Helps to heal cuts, burns, etc. Protects mother and child in operations attending childbirth. Directions on bottle.

Lysol Disinfectant

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

"Lysol" is economical . . . a treatment costs less than one cent. "Lysol" is safe . . . it contains no free caustic alkali. "Lysol" is effective . . . it destroys hidden germ-life. "Lysol" has enjoyed the full confidence of the medical profession for over 40 years.

LEHN & FINK, Inc., Bloomfield, N. J. *Dept. LO-12*
Sole Distributors of "Lysol" disinfectant

Please send me *free*, postpaid, copy of "Marriage Hygiene." (Check other booklets if desired.)

☐ Preparation for Motherhood
☐ Keeping a Healthy Home

*Name*_____

*Street*_____

*City*_____ *State*_____

© Lehn & Fink, Inc., 1933

You Can Change DARK Colors to LIGHT Colors

—Easy as A-B-C with Tintex Color Remover

Supposing you have a dark dress (or any other dark-colored article) and are pining for a lighter-colored one . . . . .

Tintex Color Remover will safely and speedily take out all trace of color (including black) from any fabric . . . . . .

Then the article or fabric can be redyed or tinted with Tintex Tints and Dyes in any new shade to suit yourself — either light or dark.

On sale at drug stores and notion counters everywhere

Tintex
COLOR REMOVER

Murder Men of Molokai

(*Continued from page* 107)

two empty whiskey bottles and a loaded revolver in the dead man's pockets."

"No hatchet?" asked Mr. Graves, slyly.

"Of course, there was a hatchet," said McNeil, a shade of irritation in his voice, "and they'd done some job with it, too. You never saw a more ghastly sight than what was left of Captain Sam Tarn . . . say, I've got a notion you don't think it was hatchet-men."

"It wasn't," said Mr. Graves. "You need a vacation, McNeil. You've been working too hard this last year, or you'd see it yourself. The *boo how doy*, as the Chinese call their hatchet-men, haven't used hatchets for years, McNeil; they use guns nowadays—and . . . they were never known to burn incense at the scene of their crime! That stunt was obviously a simple-minded, childish device on the part of someone to create a Chinese atmosphere."

"What about Lefty's story?" McNeil demanded. "Was he lying?"

"No, he was telling the truth—as far as he knew it," said Mr. Graves. "According to Lefty, the Musk brothers came into the back room downstairs last night and told him to take a bottle of whiskey up to their room. They were going out. Joe Musk had a bag in his hand, and as far as Lefty knows they did go out—the entrance to the Sailor's Nook is not visible from the back room. Lefty went upstairs with the bottle and discovered Captain Sam Tarn alive, hale and hearty and slightly drunk in the Musk brothers' room. In this way it was established that Captain Tarn was alive *after* the Musk brothers had left."

"Then what?" asked McNeil.

"According to you, Lefty's next bit of evidence came about an hour later when two Chinamen, only dimly visible in the darkness of the back room, came in and told Lefty that they had been upstairs to see the Musk brothers and that they were not there, but that there was a man there who was very sick—Captain Sam Tarn. It is your theory that these two Chinamen committed the crime. Now, why in heaven's name should two hatchet-men after slaying their victim, hang around and go so far as to make their presence known? It doesn't make sense, McNeil!"

"All right—you explain it."

"Remember," Mr. Graves continued, "that Captain Tarn had a revolver. He was a ferocious character, and if two strange Chinamen had suddenly confronted him with a hatchet, you can rest assured there would have been a battle and that gun of Tarn's would have spoken. We can safely conclude that whoever killed him was known to Captain Tarn, that he was struck down without having any suspicion that violence would be attempted."

"You mean the Musk brothers?"

"Exactly. The Musk brothers, who, with the cunning that sometimes goes with a low order of intelligence, tried to establish an alibi. Their Chinese disguises were unquestionably in the bag that Joe Musk carried. They first went down and registered with Lefty that they were going out, they then went somewhere where they donned their disguises in case they should run into anyone coming back . . . came back, took off their disguises in the hall, entered the room and killed Tarn. One of them had a grotesque idea of burning some incense, after which they came out, put on their disguises again, went downstairs and showed themselves once more—as Chinamen—to the proprietor . . . then vanished."

"It sounds reasonable," McNeil admitted grudgingly, after awhile.

"One other thing," said Simeon Graves. "Why should Chinamen kill Captain Sam Tarn unless they were sent by Yee Sin?"

"Well, why shouldn't Yee Sin be back of this? He's got an interest in killing Tarn."

"True," said Simeon Graves, "but you'll find that when Yee Sin kills, that it will be a much more subtle affair than the one you are investigating."

THERE was a commotion in the outer office. Mr. Graves heard the voice of his secretary, Miss Haber, remonstrating with some one. Then the door burst open, and there stood—Eddie Musk!

He was in a fearful state of agitation. There was an expression of terror on his face. He was gasping for breath as if he had been running hard.

"He's killing him!" he croaked. "He's killing him!" He said more, but they were meaningless, incoherent words.

McNeil strode over and shook him.

"Pull yourself together, you rat," he roared. "Who's killing who?"

For a minute Eddie Musk was speechless, staring at the inspector with dilated eyes, then he screamed:

"Yee Sin! . . . He's killing Joe!"

It took some time to get Eddie Musk to a point where he could relate coherently what had transpired. Apparently, he and his brother had gone to Yee Sin's headquarters, a building not far from the corner where Mott and Pell Streets intersect. The ground floor was occupied by Chinatown's most pretentious restaurant—the Heavenly Palace of Exquisite Delights.

It had been decided that Joe Musk was to go in alone—Eddie wouldn't disclose what the purpose of their visit was—and that Joe was to begin negotiations by informing Yee Sin that his brother Eddie was outside and that if he, Joe, failed to return within a reasonable time, Eddie would notify the police. Thus, having cleverly provided, as he thought, for his safety, Joe Musk entered.

That was the last that Eddie Musk had seen of his brother.

Fretful and anxious, he waited for two hours on the sidewalk, but there was no sign of Joe. Eddie was in a quandary. He didn't dare go to the police and yet something had to be done about Joe. Frightened but desperate, he entered the Heavenly Palace of Exquisite Delights and asked for his brother or Yee Sin. He was blandly informed by some Oriental that they didn't know his brother and that Yee Sin had not been there for days.

Then Eddie Musk with a courage that astonished himself demanded to be allowed to search the place. In fact, he went so far as to start up a rickety flight of stairs that was on the left . . . he hadn't proceeded far when strong hands seized him.

Chinamen seemed to spring from the cracks in the floor—Chinamen that swiftly but silently passed Eddie Musk to each other until he reached the one at the door . . . this one calmly threw

Murder Men of Molokai

Eddie Musk out into the street.

McNeil looked at Simeon Graves. "What do you think?" he asked.

"I think that you and I will have to visit the Heavenly Palace of Exquisite Delights," said Mr. Graves, slowly. "That is, after this man has been placed under arrest for the murder of Captain Sam Tarn."

Eddie Musk staggered at this unexpected blow. Flight occurred to him, but McNeil was at his side.

"We didn't have nothing to do with it!" Eddie screamed. His face was the color of putty. "It was a couple of Chinamen that did it!"

"Yes . . . a couple of Chinamen," Mr. Graves agreed, " . . . very silly Chinamen." He smiled, although a trifle sadly. He was never elated when he captured a criminal.

"My God!" moaned Eddie, "what will become of me without Joe?"

WITH a feeling of inexplicable foreboding, Simeon Graves with McNeil at his side made his way along Pell Street.

It may have been the peculiar Oriental smells, slightly acrid odors so characteristic of New York's Chinatown; it may have been the decaying, fetid houses, only dimly defined in the darkness, or perhaps it was something else—the thought of Yee Sin—that filled him with a sense of apprehension . . . of tragedy weird and grotesque. Mr. Graves wondered what was going on behind the drawn curtains through which lights gleamed faintly; he wondered how many tunnels ran beneath the narrow sidewalk and on what errands the shadowy figures shod in padded velvet slippers were bent. With something akin to a shudder Mr. Graves hastened on.

Farther down the street, where it ran into Mott Street, there was music and gayety. The sound came from a building colorfully lighted by paper lanterns augmented by electric lights that picked out the scarlet and gold sign of the Heavenly Palace of Exquisite Delights.

Here Mr. Graves and the inspector came to a halt. They looked through the neat windows—the restaurant was well patronized—Chinese of every class as well as a sprinkling of white sightseers sat around the marble-topped tables, consuming food and tea. But there was no sign of Joe Musk or Yee Sin.

"Let's go in," said McNeil briskly.

They entered and Mr. Graves' fears increased on the instant. Appearing from nowhere, but coming toward them as though he had been lying in wait for them, was Yee Sin!

"To what am I indebted for the honor of your presence?" Yee Sin inquired in softly guttural tones. "Has there been some unusual occurrence, or is it mere chance . . . or have you come to taste the mean efforts of my chef, a man of low caste but infinite skill with pots and skillets . . . ?"

"We're looking for Joe Musk—Captain Sam Tarn's been murdered . . ." began McNeil gruffly.

"Nang Po, my chef," Ye Sin continued unchecked, "is rightly famed for his duck—sweet and pungent, it melts on the tongue . . . his sauces flavored with pickled star fruit juice are known as far as San Francisco . . . his bamboo

(*Please turn to page* 110)

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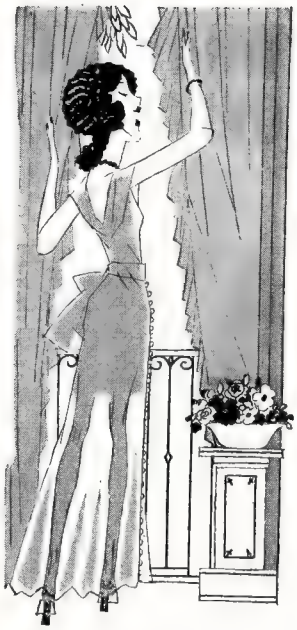

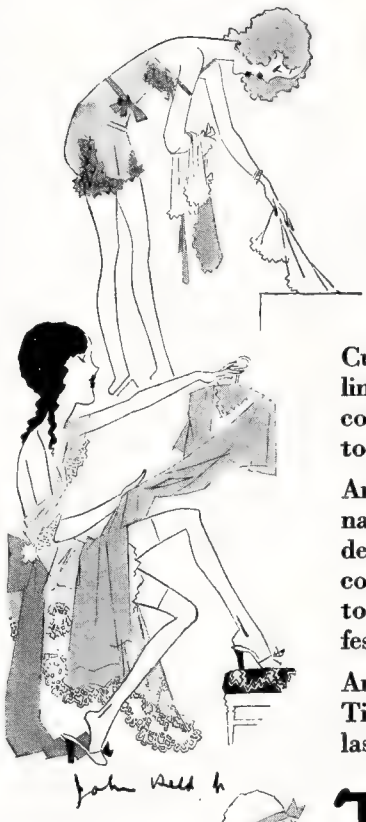

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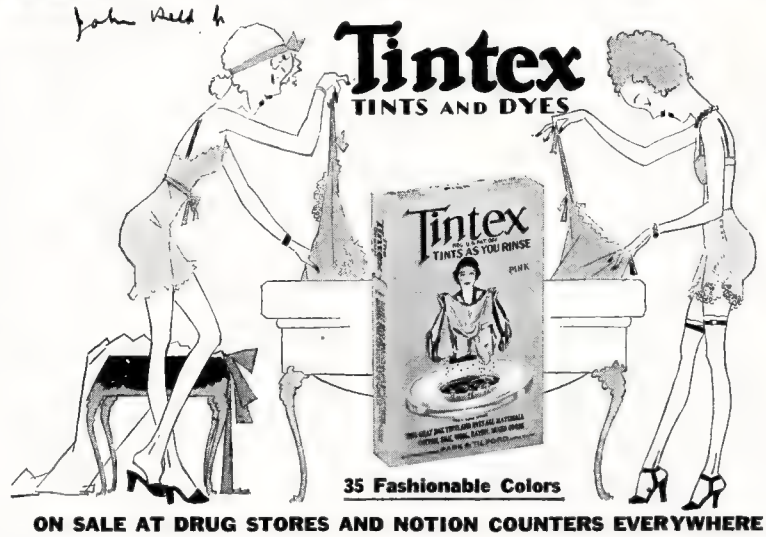

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ON SALE AT DRUG STORES AND NOTION COUNTERS EVERYWHERE

WHAT'S COME OVER JACK?

He looks years younger—doesn't complain or grouch around any more

The crowd always dodged when they saw Jack coming. They couldn't stand his grouchy manner—his pepless, spoil-sport attitude.

Now suddenly he looks and acts like a new man. Actually he feels years younger. The secret?

It's Asthenia

(Run-down condition, usually caused by Constipation)

That's the insidious thing about Asthenia . . . it drags you down, slows your mind, robs you of your joys and pleasures, yet you hardly realize you're slipping.

The NEW TASTELESS WAY TO TAKE PLUTO

Would you like for once to brush the cobwebs from your eyes . . . be ready and eager for any task . . . experience all the glories of this glorious old world? Then rid yourself of Asthenia and stay rid of it. Take Pluto Water every morning for ten mornings, and see a new world in ten days!

Taken as directed—one-fifth glass in four-fifths glass of hot water

Gentle, Effective

Don't miss a day. Take it before breakfast as recommended—one-fifth glass Pluto Water in four-fifths glass hot water—for ten straight days. Cleanse your system of every vestige of health-destroying impurities. Then you will understand why for nearly 90 years, from all over the world, people have traveled to French Lick Springs for this ten-day Pluto Water treatment. And why physicians everywhere recommend it as a mild and effective laxative — non-irritating and non-habit-forming.

Pluto Water is virtually tasteless. Mild, effective—it can be taken without disturbance of daily routine.

Two sizes—20c and 45c—at all drug counters. Bottled and sealed at French Lick Springs Hotel, French Lick, Indiana.

PLUTO WATER

America's Laxative Mineral Water

Murder Men of Molokai

(*Continued from page* 109)

sprouts simmered in honey are a delight to the palate . . . and as for his sharks' fins, they are prepared from a recipe handed down to him by his execrable ancestors a hundred years back . . ."

McNeil fidgeted impatiently, but Mr. Graves looked at the Chinaman sharply. Some concealed motive lay in back of this idle chatter; Yee Sin was not the man to dwell for long on the culinary gifts of one of his employes without a purpose.

"A cup of rice wine, properly warmed," Yee Sin went on in mocking tones, "will add to your enjoyment . . . and make you forget the passage of time . . ."

Time! That was it! Mr. Graves understood now. Yee Sin was talking to gain time.

"Where is Joe Musk?" the lawyer interrupted sternly.

Yee Sin did not immediately answer. He smoothed his black silk gown by running his hands down the front as if he were caressing the green dragon that ran from top to bottom. He held back for another minute before he spoke.

"Mr. Musk is at present engaged in tasting the pleasures of this world; he occupies one of my private rooms . . ."

"Well, he is going to move to a private room in the Tombs," said McNeil, grimly. "We've come to arrest him for murder . . ."

"There is a young lady with him," the Chinaman proceeded as if the inspector had not spoken, "a rare blossom . . . her skin is of fresh ivory, her eyes the color of dark sapphires, her hair has the sheen of black silk, and her lips are ripe . . . they bubble with tinkling laughter . . . a lotus bud is Wuh Bow . . . and a delight to Mr. Musk—they have been together for only a brief time . . ."

Simeon Graves waited to hear no more. He turned to McNeil.

"If you'll step to the door, McNeil, and summon your men by blowing your whistle, I think we'll have a look for Joe Musk," he said, simply.

Something like a smile curved the lips of Yee Sin—a smile filled with contempt and malice.

"That is unnecessary," he purred. "I myself will conduct you to his room and you may convince yourself that I have spoken truly."

He motioned them to follow and led them to the stairs on the right—the same that Eddie Musk had unsuccessfully tried to mount that afternoon. He stepped courteously aside to permit them to precede him, but McNeil shook his head.

"You lead," he said. He was taking no chances.

YEE SIN bowed and conducted them upstairs to a hall, richly carpeted; there were a series of doors right and left, and in front of one of these Yee Sin paused. He did not try to open it—instead he pushed aside a small brass disk disclosing a hole in the door sufficiently large to afford a view into the room. Yee Sin was the first to place his eye to the opening, then stepped aside for Mr. Graves to look.

Mr. Graves was a short man and had to stand on his toes, but he could see plainly enough. What he saw surprised and puzzled him.

On a small teakwood bench sat Joe Musk with the girl that Yee Sin had described at his side. The Chinaman's description of Wuh Bow's attractive loveliness hardly did her justice; she was one of the most exquisite creatures Mr. Graves had ever seen—not a slave girl plying the oldest trade in the world but a girl fit for a Manchu prince. Yet here she was—and this is what puzzled Mr. Graves—deliberately making love to the repulsive, rat-like creature that was Joe Musk. With consummate skill she was doing her best to enmesh him in the web of her charms.

And Joe Musk responded ardently, pausing only occasionally in his caresses to sip at a cup of rice wine that stood on the low table beside him. Mr. Graves stepped back so that McNeil might take a look.

"Well, I'm a son of a gun," said McNeil. "It seems a shame to break this up, especially as poor Joe isn't going to like his room in Center Street much after this . . . "

Mr. Graves was back with his eyes glued to the opening. He was running his fingers through his curly gray hair as he invariably did when trying to solve a particularly knotty problem. Unquestionably Joe Musk was safe and unharmed, aside from being a little drunk . . . then what was the purpose of all this? And certainly Yee Sin would hardly have the temerity to have Joe Musk killed right now in front of their very eyes. Still, Mr. Graves wasn't satisfied. That dainty creature striving so hard to ensnare the man . . . there was something unnatural about it . . .

Mr. Graves started.

The girl seemed to be making a supreme effort. With her lustrous yet haunting eyes she looked more intently at the man beside her. Her flower-like hands rested on his for an instant, then touched his cheeks and smoothed his hair. Joe Musk, slightly maudlin but enchanted, appeared afraid to move; he was rendered motionless by her tenderness . . . she leaned over him, her lips close to his, and Joe Musk kissed her fiercely. To Mr. Graves it seemed as if Wuh Bow's whole body crawled at his touch, yet she didn't draw back. She had made him kiss her—yet she loathed it! What could it mean?

And now she went further. Her arm stole around his shoulder, her hand reached up and gently forced his head down until it was pillowed on her small bosom . . . he looked up at her, smiling foolishly, and she gazed down at him, her almond eyes soft and languorous. With her free hand she reached for a fan that was on the bench next to her . . . a beautiful fan of golden feathers.

Slowly she waved the fan to and fro above his head as if to cool the fever of his passions.

Mr. Graves grew strangely uneasy. There was something prearranged about this scene . . . that fan . . . And still what harm could there be in a fan? Behind him, Mr. Graves could hear McNeil impatiently ask him something, he heard the sibilant voice of Yee Sin, but he failed to catch the meaning of what either said. In that little room before him something was about to happen . . . something incredible . . . something beyond the bounds of his imagination.

The fan . . . the fan . . . the fan . . .

Rhythmically it went . . . to and fro . . . to the accompaniment of the jin-

Murder Men of Molokai

gling bracelets on Wuh Bow's arm. The fan . . . With all his astounding powers of deduction concentrated on the fan, Mr. Graves could not conjecture its purpose.

Without taking his eyes away from the opening, he groped for and found the knob of the door. He turned it softly; then, in order to determine which way it opened, he pushed gently. He must be ready to leap into that room at the slightest sign. The door did not budge—it must open outward; he pulled, but still it refused to move. The door was locked! Mr. Graves was about to turn away and instruct McNeil accordingly when he became aware of something that caused him to remain another minute.

With each wave of the fan, *the feathers came a little closer to Joe Musk's face!*

Mr. Graves was certain of it! He was conscious of his heart thumping wildly. In another second he would know the secret of the fan! But he couldn't wait, he had to tear himself away—they must break down the door and save Joe Musk . . . save him for what? To be tried, convicted, and executed for the murder of Captain Sam Tarn! Something whispered to Mr. Graves . . . stay and see what happens . . . otherwise you may never know . . . it is more important to take the risk and convict the fiend that conceived this . . . Yee Sin . . . than . . .

The fan was now quite close to Joe Musk's face. He moved a little—the proximity of the fan bothered him; but she was holding his attention with her eyes . . . eyes brilliant beyond description, burning their promise into his soul.

The fan brushed across his lips!

"The door! The door, McNeil . . . break it down!" Mr. Graves screamed. "Quick . . . break it down . . . do you hear!" Simeon Graves repeated in a frenzy without budging from where he stood.

At last McNeil reacted. "Then get out of my way," he roared.

"I'm not in your way—never mind me!"

To save his life, Mr. Graves couldn't have taken his eyes away from what he saw. As the fan brushed across Joe Musk's lips, nothing happened for a second, then a look of astonishment and discomfort crossed Joe Musk's face; summarily he pushed the girl aside. He got to his feet and his hand went to his throat . . . he opened his mouth several times as if trying to catch his breath. His face was turning red. He gasped, then gagged . . . he leaned forward and coughed desperately, but to no avail.

He pounded his chest with his fists, then tried to pound himself on the back with his own hand. Joe Musk was choking . . . slowly strangling to death! One hope remained for him—the girl. He looked around for her; she was standing at the rear by a second door. There was a smile on her lips, cold and dispassionate—not a vestige of pity; perhaps she was thinking of the vile caresses to which she had submitted. She watched him until his face grew purple . . . then black . . . until he tore at his throat with his nails . . . then she vanished through the door.

It was at this instant that McNeill's huge form hurtled itself at the panel

(*Please turn to page* 112)

This Little Twin used Tooth Paste "D." Stains remain, lustre dull, inflammation only slightly improved.
But this Little Twin used Pebeco. . . . Got whiter teeth, brilliant lustre, firmer and harder gums.

Twins, Muriel and Charlotte Denenfeld, age 18, residing at 615 West 164th Street, New York

Twins test six leading Tooth Pastes

PEBECO PROVES BEST

"Why not test Pebeco against the five other leading tooth pastes on twins?" we said.

"Fine!" said Dr. David B. Freundlich, leading dental authority of New York. "Twins provide the most impartial possible testing ground for tooth paste merit. Same environment. Same heredity. Hence their tooth and mouth structure is apt to be alike."

So that's what he did. Tested Pebeco and the five other leading nationally advertised tooth pastes on twins—for thirty days. One twin in each pair used Pebeco twice daily. The other used tooth paste A, B, C, D or E, (well-known brands).

Read at the right what Pebeco did in comparison with the five other tooth pastes!

Pebeco was more than twice as effective because of its basic ingredient, Potassium Chlorate. This substance is an *active agent* in assisting nature to correct acid mouth, helping to check mouth acids which cause tooth decay. It stimulates the flow of saliva, nature's own process for *keeping* the teeth sound, gums and mouth vigorous and healthy.

You can prove it, too. Try Pebeco—10-cent or 50-cent size—in your *own* mouth. You will *feel* it working for the good of your mouth and gums. And just *see* what it does for your teeth! Buy a tube of Pebeco today!

On These Five Vital Points Pebeco Wins!

1. WHITENESS . . . Pebeco whitened the teeth in 98% of the cases—the five other tooth pastes in only 56%, proving Pebeco's superiority in cleaning and removing stains and discoloration.

2. LUSTRE . . . Pebeco improved the lustre in 94% of the cases—the others in only 40%. Pebeco, in no case, made the slightest scratch upon the enamel.

3. FILM . . . Pebeco removed mucin plaques (film) from teeth of 88% of the users—others from only 32%.

4. GUMS . . . Pebeco checked inflammation and bleeding, toned and hardened the gums of 97% of the users, other tooth pastes of only 57%.

5. ACID MOUTH . . . Pebeco alone—of all the well-known tooth pastes tested—actually assisted in stimulating the natural flow of helpful saliva which combats the acids that start decay. Other tooth pastes brought only slight or temporary improvement in acid mouth conditions.

Approved by Good Housekeeping Bureau

Why Twins and What They Proved

I chose groups of twins because their mouth conditions are apt to be identical. One twin used Pebeco twice daily for 30 days. The other, tooth paste A, B, C, D or E—one of the five other leading brands. I examined each pair weekly. At the end of 30 days, I submitted my reports, and the statements in this advertisement are in accordance with the facts. For professional information on these tests, write me at 101 Central Park West, New York.

(*Signed*) DAVID B. FREUNDLICH, D.D.S.

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MEN CAN TELL

by the Smartness of her Make-up!

MEN compare her with other girls and find her lovelier by far! *Her* lips never shriek "paint". For she always uses a marvelous new kind of lipstick that brings smooth, *natural* color. Rich, glowing color...but not a trace of paint to make her mouth conspicuous!

A lipstick called Tangee

Other lipsticks may coat your lips with paint. But Tangee isn't paint. It's a special kind of lipstick which blends so perfectly that it looks like your own coloring! No hard lipstick line. No caking. No painted look.

In the stick, Tangee looks orange. But put it on. You'll see it change color to the one shade of blush-rose best suited to you! Actually, Tangee brings out the natural color hidden in your lips!

Use Tangee and see fresh, natural color in your lips! Costs no more than ordinary lipsticks . . . at any toilet goods counter.

Rouge matches lipstick

Tangee Rouge Compact changes to the one shade most natural for your type! Never causes an over-rouged look. A perfect match for Tangee Lipstick! Comes in refillable compact. Refills fit compact perfectly.

NRA WE DO OUR PART

New! SMALL SIZE TANGEE LIPSTICK 39¢

Also in Theatrical—a deeper shade for professional use

TANGEE

World's Most Famous Lipstick

ENDS THAT PAINTED LOOK

★ **SPECIAL 10c OFFER!** TG12

The George W. Luft Co. (Enclose 10¢ stamps or coin)
417 Fifth Ave., New York

Rush Miracle Make-up Set containing miniature **Tangee Lipstick, Rouge** and **Powder.**

Check Shade ☐ Flesh ☐ Rachel ☐ Light Rachel

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Murder Men of Molokai

(*Continued from page* 111)

to the left of Mr. Graves. The lawyer really wasn't in his way. The hole through which he was peering spellbound, was at the extreme right, while the lock was at the left of the door. Nevertheless, Mr. Graves stepped aside before McNeil's second attempt shivered the panels.

"Too late," said Mr. Graves, wearily, but his voice was drowned by the inspector's third charge that brought the door crashing down.

As they plunged into the little room they heard, as if from a great distance, the faintly ironic laughter of Yee Sin.

IT required only a brief examination to prove that Joe Musk was dead.

"What the devil killed him?" asked McNeil, a look of bewilderment on his face.

"I don't know," said Mr. Graves.

He knelt down and bent over the face of Joe Musk. It was black and horribly contorted. He must have died in frightful agony. Mr. Graves bent closer and sniffed at the dead man's lips. There was no odor of any poison known to the lawyer. He was about to rise when his keen eyes detected in the corners of the dead man's mouth something that caused him to start . . . tiny specks of gold! He rubbed his finger across Joe Musk's lips, peered at it and held it up for McNeil to see.

"Look!" he whispered.

"What is it?"

"Specks of gold!" said Mr. Graves in a voice strangely tinged with awe.

"Specks of gold! What the hell . . . !"

"Now I know what killed him," said Mr. Graves. "And I understand the fan, too. Good God, McNeil . . ." With horror-struck eyes Simeon Graves stared at the inspector. "Joe Musk died the Death of the Gold Leaf!"

McNeil blinked several times. He gazed doubtfully at Mr. Graves as if his friend were momentarily deranged.

"He did—did he?" Then added soothingly: "That's fine . . ."

"I don't blame you for not having heard of it," said Simeon Graves. "It's a very old Chinese method, forgotten I thought by this time. It was originally a form of suicide, but Yee Sin found a way to commit murder with it. A piece of fine gold leaf is laid over the lips, the mere act of breathing is sufficient to draw it into the throat where it covers the mouth of the wind pipe, and the victim dies from suffocation."

"But how in heaven's name was the girl able to put the gold leaf over Joe Musk's mouth without his noticing it?" asked the inspector, incredulously.

"The fan . . . McNeil. It was on the tips of the fan which she brushed across his lips. You've seen people put gold lettering on windows. They flick the leaf out of a book with a fine brush and slap it gently against the window. Of course, Joe Musk noticed and gave a gasp of surprise. That gasp was his undoing. He sucked in the gold leaf."

McNeil stood as if transfixed. At last he roused himself.

"Let's go," he barked. "I want to lay my hands on Yee Sin."

The Chinaman was not hard to locate. He was downstairs, seated alone at a table near a window that looked out into the street. A cup of tea from which he occasionally sipped was in his hand.

The panorama without was not particularly amusing, only an occasional slouching figure went by, and yet Yee Sin smiled and was still smiling when Mr. Graves and McNeil appeared at his table.

"Joe Musk is dead . . . murdered!" said McNeil, sternly. "He died of the . . . of the . . . Gold Leaf," he added, awkwardly. He felt a little foolish; the thing seemed impossible even now.

"Ah!" said Yee Sin. "An ingenious invention of my ancestors."

McNeil hesitated. He was wondering what the captain of his precinct would say when he appeared with Yee Sin, charging him with having murdered a man with a gold leaf.

"Where is the girl?" he demanded, truculently.

"Women," said Yee Sin, "are like the dew . . . they evaporate."

He was looking at neither Mr. Graves nor the inspector. He was gazing out of the window. He started to raise his cup. It was almost at his lips when it fell from his nerveless fingers with a crash! Yee Sin half rose from his chair.

Simeon Graves spun around and looked in the direction of the Chinaman's glance.

Outside a man's face, livid with rage, was pressed against the glass. A girl was tugging at his arm, trying to lead him away.

Mr. Graves stared with wide open eyes.

It was Mr. Brown . . . and the girl with him was Nan Dascom!

The strangest murder mystery ever written will be continued next month. Oley Dascom's weird will, the terrible worm's kiss, and the diabolical Chinaman will provide you with more unsurpassed thrills in the January issue, on sale December 1, 1933.

The January issues of

- HOME
- NEW MOVIE
- Illustrated LOVE
- MYSTERY

will be on sale December 1st. Get your copy early . . . the supply won't last all month.

The Vivacious Type

(*Continued from page* 53)

powder to heighten the tone. The choice of color depends on the tone of the skin chiefly. If your skin has some yellow in it, use rouge that tones toward the orange shades. If, however, your skin has some pink in it use the rouge shades that are modified by blue such as American beauty, rose, raspberry, blush, etc. This color choice goes for your lip rouge as well. Whether you use a light or deep shade, one with much or little blue or orange in it will depend on the colors of your clothes, your eyes and hair, and whether it is for daytime or night wear.

A brighter rouge, closer in shade to pure red is best for night use. With reds wear a color that approximates the color of your gown. For black and white a more intense shade, even in daytime. With blue eyes, unless your skin is very golden, you would look best using a rouge with a slight bluish cast.

EXPERIMENT with rouge placing until you find the way that suits your face best. If you have ever had natural color place your rouge where the natural color came. If your face is broad, place the rouge close to the nose, in the center of the cheeks, for daytime wear; for night, at the sides of the cheeks, since then that section will be cast in the shadow and your face will appear more narrow.

A narrow face should use the opposite tactics, with the rouge placed close to the hairline for daytime and in the center of the cheeks at night.

Never apply your rouge in a small hard circle. Let the effect be triangular and always blend off the edges so that there is no sharp line of demarcation.

Use mascara in the daytime to color the bleached tips of your eyelashes and use it the full length of the lashes at night. Only be sure to remove all particles with a dry brush. Pencil your eyebrows lightly, choosing that which does not differ too greatly from your natural color. Eye shadow should be used discreetly in the daytime and always with night make-up. For deep set eyes carry it up close to the eyebrows and use little on the lids.

LIP rouge is always the final step in make-up and should be applied when you have finished dressing and then allowed to set a few minutes. However you apply it, smooth it off with the third finger of your right hand to give an even coating. If you wish to increase the size of your lips you will need to use more rouge on them. Don't attempt to enlarge them too much. Just edge over the natural line. The curve of the upper lip may be enhanced in this way and also by taking a bit of folded tissue and wiping free of rouge a thin line down the center of the lip. If you wish to make your lips appear smaller rouge just inside the natural line and powder over it.

When you have finished look over the job in your triple mirror and tone up or down as needed.

For further tips on make-up as well as news notes of the newest beauty products, write for our December Make-Up Box circular. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Pamela Pinkerton, care of THE MYSTERY MAGAZINE, ***55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.***

YOUTH'S CHARM

may be yours if you keep that schoolgirl complexion

YOU may bring romance closer . . . you may hold youth's charm and appeal as years go by, if you'll keep youth glowing in your skin. And this simple daily treatment is priceless, for it is based on youth-protecting olive and palm oils.

These oils are blended, by secret process, in the making of Palmolive, *the soap of youth.* No other blend, in all the world, is like this.

Nature's own beauty oils

Olive oil—soothing, enriching—gives Palmolive a velvety lather. This mild lather *penetrates* the tiny pores, freeing them of accumulations easily, leaving skin soft, smooth, gloriously clear and fresh.

Olive oil, too, gives Palmolive that wonderfully rich, olive-green color.

Remember, into each cake of Palmolive Soap goes an abundance of olive oil, nature's greatest beauty aid.

Begin this beauty treatment

Buy three cakes today. Then start this 2-minute beauty treatment recommended by over twenty thousand beauty specialists: every morning and evening, massage a rich lather of Palmolive Soap gently into the skin with your hands; rinse with warm water, then with cold. And, after you've done that regularly for a month, see how easy it is to hold youth's charm, in spite of birthdays.

PALMOLIVE . . .
the soap of Youth

Treat COLDS in the First Stage!

Colds go thru 3 Stages and they're far Easier Relieved in the First than in the Second or Third!...

IT PAYS to know something about colds! They are a great cause of prolonged sickness and financial loss.

A cold ordinarily progresses through three stages. The first—the Dry stage, the first 24 hours. The second—the Watery Secretion stage, from 1 to 3 days. The third—the Mucous Secretion stage. The time to "nail" a cold is in the first or Dry stage. It is twice as easily relieved then.

The Wise Measure

The thing to take upon catching cold is Grove's Laxative Bromo Quinine. It stops a cold quickly because it is expressly a cold remedy and because it does the four things necessary.

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GROVE'S LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE

Canterbury Cathedral Murder

(*Continued from page* 26)

book. "Looks like a farewell message to me." He strode off.

The sergeant read the verse aloud, nodding.

"Think it could be a suicide, doctor?" he asked.

"Why, yes . . . it could. Unusual, but by no means unprecedented. The noble Romans, when they were tired of life, usually fell on their swords, didn't they? That silver pencil, almost as sharp as a needle, didn't need much force behind it to penetrate to the heart. The weight of his body, against the stone slab, would have done it. And with the butt-end of the pencil clutched in his fingers . . . . that farewell message in his book" . . . . he shrugged.

Harris, the other policeman, now came back, bringing several of the wide-eyed tourists with him. All remembered seeing the young man sitting on the steps half an hour before. He had held his head in his hands as if praying. One gray-haired woman testified that in going down to look at the slab she had accidentally trodden on the open notebook, lying on the steps at the young man's side. When she apologized he had glanced up and nodded. This, according to the verger, was at a quarter past three.

"Miss Watson and I found the body at twenty minutes to four," Shirley volunteered. "I took the time immediately, of course." She smiled at the sergeant, as though *he* would appreciate her caution. "He can't have been dead over twenty-five minutes."

"Rather less, if anything," said the doctor, who was searching the young man's pockets. "Nothing here to identify him," he went on, placing some keys, a small pile of money, a pipe and pouch of tobacco on the floor.

Shirley went to the steps and sat in approximately the same position the young man had occupied when seen by the tourists.

"Would you mind, Madame," she asked the gray-haired woman, "going down to look at the slab just as you did before?"

"Why . . . not at all." Somewhat mystified, the woman descended the short flight of steps, went up again.

"Thanks!" Shirley rose, her eyes shining, and stood beside the young man's body. "You can see plainly, sergeant," she continued, pointing, "the print of this lady's shoe on the open page of the notebook. There. Very faint, of course . . . under the pencilled verse. Which would seem to show that he wrote it *after* the verger's party came by . . . "

"No doubt." The sergeant nodded. "Any of you recognize the fellow?" he went on, addressing the little group. "Suppose you step down and look. Bring the rest of them over, Harris. If possible we must get the body identified."

But although the score or more of visitors trooped dutifully down to where the dead man lay not one of them, so they declared, was able to throw any light upon his identity.

"Very well!" The sergeant snapped a rubber band about his notebook, placed it in his pocket. "That's all. You'll be wanted, at the inquest most likely, young ladies," he went on to Shirley and me. "If we need any of the rest of you people, you'll be notified." With a nod he dismissed the little group.

Shirley stood watching them and I felt sure, from my knowledge of her, that the features, the general appearance of each one was being recorded by her acute and sensitive brain. When they had drifted off to continue their sightseeing in care of the verger, she took me by the arm.

"What about tea?" she said.

BUT as soon as we had passed the doors of the Cathedral I realized that her mind was set on other things than tea. Watching carefully for a moment to make sure that no one had followed us from the building she drew me toward her car.

"Hurry, darling," she whispered. "We have work to do!"

I stared at her, astonished.

"Apparently you still think it wasn't a case of suicide?" I remarked, as we got in.

"Suicide my grandmother?" snapped Shirley, glancing through the rear window of the car. "One of the most daring murders I've ever come across!"

"I don't see why you think so," I objected.

"It's simple enough! The dead man was left-handed! And left-handed people don't stab themselves with their right hands!"

"How do you know he was left-handed?"

"Because the fingernails of his left hand were much more worn and broken than those of his right! Because, between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand was a dark smudge, made by the silver pencil when he wrote with it! Because he carried his money in his left-hand trousers' pocket! And because that woman I asked to walk down the steps . . . . the one who trod on his notebook . . . passed to the right side of him!"

"But . . . . I don't see what that shows?"

"You would, if you thought a moment. A left-handed man would hold a notebook in his right hand, wouldn't he? And if he laid it down on the steps beside him it would be at his right side . . . . just where that woman stepped on it!"

"But he had it in his *left* hand when we found him!"

"Which clearly proves that the murderer, when he put it there, either forgot, or didn't know, that the young fellow was left-handed!"

"Shirley! You're . . . . wonderful!" I gasped.

"The killer came up behind him, no doubt," Shirley went on, "as he was sitting on the steps with his head in his hands. Throttled him to silence with one arm about his neck . . . snatched up the pencil with the other and stabbed him to the heart! Then lowered him on the slab, thrust the handle of the pencil into his right hand, the notebook into his left, and walked off . . . after searching the body. . . ."

"How do you know it was searched?"

"One of the pockets was turned inside out. I looked through them myself, while you were calling the verger. Stuffed in his tobacco pouch I found this." She took a crumpled paper from her purse.

I read the words on it, written in a crabbed, feminine hand.

"Received of Eric Sefton 30 shillings for one week's board and lodging in advance. Mrs. Ellen Chown—Dover Road."

Canterbury Cathedral Murder

"We're going there now," Shirley murmured. "To see Mrs. Chown. His landlady, it appears. The receipt, you may have noticed, is dated the day before yesterday!"

"But shouldn't we have told the police?"

"Yes. But they'll find out soon enough. And I wanted to get there first. Even now we may be too late!" She glanced at the house before which we presently drew up . . . . a small but very home-like cottage on the edge of the town. "Let me do the talking, Joan," she went on, as we hurried to the door.

THE middle-aged woman who opened it for us seemed, I thought, a bit startled.

"Mr. Sefton isn't in," she said, "but I'm looking for him back at any moment."

"I'm afraid he won't be back at all, Mrs. Chown," Shirley said gravely. "A young man answering his description was found dead in Canterbury Cathedral this afternoon . . . ."

Mrs. Chown sagged against the door frame, her expression dismayed.

"Oh . . . the poor young fellow!" she murmured. "My daughter will be terribly upset!"

"She was a friend of his, then?"

"In a way, Miss. They'd got to know each other quite well, in the short time he'd been here. Such a nice young man!" She wiped a suggestion of tears from her eyes. "Mabel was real fond of him."

"If we might come in for a moment." Shirley said quickly, "I'd like to ask you a few questions. My friend and I" . . . . she glanced at me . . . . "are journalists from London." This was true enough, as far as *I* was concerned, at least. Shirley might have been anything, from a duchess down.

"Why . . . of course." Mrs. Chown ushered us into her small, plain parlor. "I'll be glad to tell you what little I know. Mr. Sefton arrived here about ten days ago. A writer, he said he was, a poet, on a walking tour for his vacation, and wanted lodgings for the night. The next day he liked his room so much he thought he would stay on, and paid a week's board in advance. The day before yesterday he paid for a second week. A very quiet respectable young man; spent most of his time in his room. My daughter, Mabel, who works for Frost & Chandler's, the florists, in town, used to talk to him, evenings. She rides to work every day on her bicycle, but of course, at night . . . ."

"I see," interrupted Shirley quickly, and I saw that she was tremendously interested. "Mr. Sefton didn't go out much, then?"

"Scarcely at all, Miss, since he came. He wouldn't have gone to Canterbury today, he told me, if he hadn't wanted to get his hair cut."

"He was left-handed, wasn't he?" Shirley asked.

"He was, Miss. But very quick with tools, just the same. I know, because he put a new stopper on the water-butt for me. And fixed my rustic rose-arbor, when the storm last week blew it down. And mended the broken kitchen step, just as good as new. You wouldn't think a writer would be so handy with tools."

(*Please turn to page* 116)

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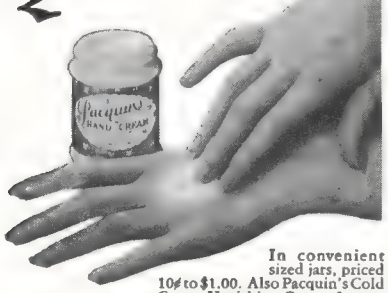

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Canterbury Cathedral Murder

(*Continued from page* 115)

"You certainly wouldn't," Shirley agreed. "Did he have many callers, Mrs. Chown?"

"Not a one, Miss, all the time he was here, until this afternoon."

"This afternoon?" Shirley's eyes were snapping.

"Why . . . . yes, Miss. The man who came just before you did. A friend of Mr. Sefton's, he said, with a message for him . . . ."

"Did you let him go up to Mr. Sefton's room?"

"Why . . . yes, Miss. How did you know?"

"I suspected it," Shirley replied, frowning. "What did he want there?"

"To leave him a note, he said . . ."

"Oh!" Shirley rose. "I was afraid we'd be too late. Will you let us see his room, too, Mrs. Chown?"

"Why . . . I don't know of any objection." The landlady went to the door. "There's really nothing in it . . . . the poor fellow only brought a knapsack. Come this way."

WE hurried up the stairs. Mrs. Chown's statements about the young man's room were borne out by the facts. His knapsack, empty, hung on the back of the door. Its contents, a meagre supply of shirts, socks and underwear had been arranged in the drawers of the dresser. The small wooden table contained only a few gaudy magazines, with no sign of poems or literary work of any other nature to be seen. In fact there was not a letter or scrap of paper in the place . . . . not even the note the young man's caller was supposed to have left for him.

"He must have changed his mind," Mrs. Chown muttered, her old eyes troubled. "When he came down, he asked me about Mabel . . . . wanted to know where she worked."

"Indeed!" said Shirley, who was making a meticulous search of the room. "What did this friend look like?"

"He was medium tall," the landlady replied, "smooth shaved, and had on a gray suit . . . or was it blue . . .?"

"How old?" Shirley groaned, realizing the uncertainty of all such evidence. "Around thirty, I'd say."

Shirley led the way down the stairs. From her expression I was certain that she had not discovered a single clue of any value in solving the mystery. But her face still wore its gay and indomitable smile.

"Wouldn't you like to show us your rose garden, Mrs. Chown?" she said, as we reached the lower hall. "I adore flowers."

"I'd be proud to," the landlady replied. "Come this way." She led us to the kitchen, opened the rear door. "Here's the step Mr. Sefton fixed for me," she went on, as we passed into the garden. "Concrete. Much stronger than the old one was. And there's the rose arbor he mended." She indicated a rustic trellis covered with a mass of crimson blossoms. "The wind had knocked it flat. My larkspur and primroses are doing very well, don't you think?"

"They are indeed," Shirley agreed, but I saw that she was not interested, and after a few moments she put out her hand. "Thanks for your kindness, Mrs. Chown," she went on. "And don't say anything to the police about our having been here, will you? They rather object to journalists butting in." She shook hands with the old lady and a moment later we were on our way back to the car.

"The murderer didn't find what he wanted when he searched the body," Shirley said, "or he wouldn't have come here."

"Do you think he found it here?" I inquired.

"That," Shirley smiled, "depends on whether he has gone to see Mrs. Chown's daughter. Since we are about to interview the young lady ourselves we shall soon know." She added another five miles to the speed of her small, smart roadster. "One thing is clear . . . Mr. Sefton was no poet. Did you notice the way the step, and that rose arbor were mended. Skilful work, my dear Joan. Our young friend, without meaning to do so, told the world that he was a first-class mechanic." She did not speak again until we drew up before the expensive looking shop of Messrs Frost & Chandler.

Miss Chown, a sharp-eyed, good-looking girl, was waiting on a customer when we came in, but presently joined us.

"You want to see me?" she asked, her manner apprehensive.

"Yes." Shirley laid her hand on the girl's arm. "About that man who called here . . . talked with you, this afternoon. The young man in a gray suit?"

"He wasn't young," Miss Chown objected. "Forty, at least. And his suit wasn't gray . . . it was tan . . ."

"My mistake," Shirley murmured, giving me a triumphant glance. "Would you mind telling me what he wanted?"

The girl's eyes narrowed, at this.

"Why should I?" she asked. "Who are you?"

Shirley did not pursue the fiction of our being journalists.

"Miss Chown," she said gravely, "a desperate crime was committed in Canterbury Cathedral this afternoon. A young man, known to you as Eric Sefton, was deliberately murdered there!" She tightened her grip on the girl's arm as the latter swayed against the counter. "Don't do anything to attract attention, please, but I suspect that this man who came to see you was his murderer. He believes himself safe, for the time being at least, because the police think Mr. Sefton committed suicide. Please tell me, as briefly as you can, what the fellow wanted?"

Miss Chown passed her hand across her eyes; it was clear that the news of Mr. Sefton's death had come as a great shock.

"Are . . . are you sure it was . . . Eric?" she whispered.

"Not absolutely," Shirley said. "I am going to ask you, when we leave here, to go to the police . . . . identify his body. But first tell me why that man came to see you?"

"He . . . he wanted to know," Miss Chown stammered, "if . . . if Eric had given me anything of value to keep for him. He said he was a friend of Eric's and had been looking for him all the afternoon. It seems that unless he could produce this . . . this article . . . immediately, Eric would lose a great deal of money."

"He didn't tell you what it was?"

"No."

"Or that Mr. Sefton was dead?"

Canterbury Cathedral Murder

"Oh, no. He said he'd been trying to find him."

"And what did you say?"

"That Eric never gave me anything to keep for him at all . . . that I knew nothing about his affairs. Finally the man went away. But I was frightened, because . . . because Mr. Sefton *did* tell me that . . . that somebody might try to rob him, and that was why he was afraid to go out. . . ."

"Rob him of what?"

"I don't know. He never said. But it must have been something he carried in his knapsack, because, when he first came, he wouldn't let the thing out of his sight. Later on, after he unpacked it, he didn't seem to care. . . ."

Shirley stood staring at the girl without seeing her; there was a queer, clairvoyant look in her eyes that told me her thoughts were far away. Presently she shook her head with a swift, decisive gesture, glanced at her watch.

"Half-past five!" she said. "You close at six, I imagine. Get your hat, Miss Chown! I'll arrange with the proprietors for you to leave!" She hurried to the small office at the rear of the shop and returned almost immediately with a slim, gray-haired gentleman who assured the sales-girl she was at liberty to go for the day. A moment later we were climbing into Shirley's car.

We did not, however, drive at once to the police station, but made a short stop at what appeared to be a newspaper office on the way. Shirley, although she left us for ten minutes, offered no explanations, and presently we were once more facing the beetle-browed sergeant who had questioned us at the cathedral.

"Have you found out who the dead man was?" she asked.

"Not yet," replied the sergeant, eyeing us curiously, "but we are expecting reports at almost any moment."

"I think this girl may be able to identify him," Shirley went on. "Her name is Chown . . . Mabel Chown . . . and she works for Frost & Chandler, the florists. Unless I am very much mistaken the young man was a boarder at her mother's house."

The sergeant did not, as I feared he might, question Shirley concerning the source of her information. Perhaps the magic name of Sherlock Holmes lent her a certain glamour. Instead he turned to Miss Chown.

"Come with me, please," he said, going to the door. "Since I don't suppose you care to visit the mortuary, Miss Holmes," he went on, "I suggest that you and Miss Watson wait here."

When they had gone I turned to Shirley.

"He still thinks it a case of suicide," I whispered.

"Yes," Shirley replied. "I wonder if Mr. Sefton wrote that verse in his notebook to prove to the girl that he really was a poet?"

"What do you want to know for?" I asked.

"Because," said Shirley grimly, "if he didn't, then it wasn't written by him at all! I wish I had a sample of his handwriting!" After that she remained buried in thought until Miss Chown, very much shaken, returned in charge of the sergeant.

"It's young Sefton, all right," the

(*Please turn to page* 118)

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Canterbury Cathedral Murder

(*Continued from page* 117)

latter said. "I'll send a man to look over his papers, his belongings. If the poor fellow had any relatives they should be notified at once."

Shirley gave me one of her swift, inscrutable glances.

"Joan!" she said. "Take Miss Chown out to the car. We're going to drive her home. I'd like a few words with the sergeant."

I nodded. Shirley, I knew, was up to something mysterious. It was fifteen minutes before she rejoined us and when she did there was an expression on her face that boded ill to whoever had killed young Sefton. Yet the fact that there had been a murder was still unknown; as we drove off, boys were crying late editions of the afternoon newspapers, with full details of "The horrible suicide in Canterbury Cathedral!"

MRS. CHOWN, we learned on arriving at the cottage, had not been disturbed by further visitors; even the policeman the sergeant had planned to send out had not yet arrived. Shirley, to my surprise, announced that she was hungry, and accepted with what seemed to me almost indecent alacrity Mrs. Chown's invitation to supper. While it was being prepared she went into the garden, remained there alone for half an hour, smoking endless cigarettes, apparently trying to solve some intricate problem.

But as soon as supper was over she became once more her eager, active self. Sending me out to the car, she stopped for a short talk with Miss Chown. When she rejoined me she was beaming.

"We'll give the affair a good write-up in our paper!" she called back, noisily starting the engine.

"Well, Shirley," I said, as we drove off through the darkness, "we don't seem any nearer to the murderer than we were before."

She gave me an impish grin, at that.

"You don't realize, Joan," she whispered, "just how near to the murderer we really are . . . or have been." For a moment she glanced back down the shadowy street, then, to my surprise, she suddenly turned off the Dover Road and brought the car to a standstill in one of the side streets. "We're getting out here, darling," she said.

I climbed down, considerably mystified, having supposed we were on our way back to the old Falstaff Inn where we had taken rooms for the night. No thought of investigating murders had brought us to Canterbury; Shirley and I had set out from Eastmill the day before, on a leisurely progress to join Mother and Dad at Folkstone for the week-end.

As soon as we reached the sidewalk, Shirley started back in the general direction of the cottage, taking, however a round-about way which brought us, through dark lanes and byroads to the rear of the Chown's little garden. A thick hedge of evergreens bordered the further edge of it; when we had noiselessly forced a way through their branches we found ourselves close behind the rose arbor, the heavy vines of which hid us completely from sight of those in the house. It was now, I knew, close to nine o'clock, and while there was no moon, the night sky was still sufficiently luminous to render objects in the garden quite plainly visible.

We crouched, hidden, behind the arbor for what seemed hours, although the ringing of churchbells presently told me that it was only half-past nine. Then Shirley, who had offered no explanations, nodded significantly in the direction of the house.

I followed her gaze. The kitchen door was being slowly pushed open. Against the light behind it I saw the slender figure of a woman . . . too slender, I realized at once, to be that of Mrs. Chown. Her daughter; no doubt, coming into the garden for a breath of air.

But a breath of air proved not to be Miss Chown's purpose. As she crept into view I saw, dimly, that she held an object of some sort in her hand. Presently, bending over the new concrete steps so kindly built by Mr. Sefton at the kitchen door she began an operation of some sort upon it; I could clearly hear the clink of metal against stone.

"Shirley!" I whispered. "It's that girl! What does it mean?"

"Be quiet!" Shirley replied, and I saw the glint of a revolver in her hand.

I said no more, but it came to me, suddenly, that whatever the object Mr. Sefton had guarded so carefully in his knapsack, it might well have been hidden beneath this newly-made concrete step . . . and Miss Chown, now that the coast was clear, was engaged in recovering it. How all this fitted into Shirley's theory of a murder in Canterbury Cathedral was a mystery to me but I knew that it would be useless to question her about it now. Nor was such questioning necessary.

As Miss Chown, manipulating what I presently made out to be a crowbar, succeeded in overturning the step, I saw a dark figure emerge from the shadows at the side of the house and leap toward her.

Instantly the girl gave a shrill and terrified cry and at the same moment Shirley rose, and revolver in hand went plunging across the garden.

At the foot of the kitchen steps a sharp struggle was going on; I heard the impact of a blow and Miss Chown's terrified cries ceased abruptly. A moment later, the figure of a man sprang toward the front of the house, tucking, as he went, a long slender object beneath his arm.

Shirley stood for an instant gazing after him. Then her hand shot up and I heard the sharp report of her pistol. Two other figures, racing through the darkness, bore down upon the fleeing man, now clutching in agony a shattered arm.

Shirley was upon him almost as soon as the two policemen . . . was picking up the slender roll he had dropped upon the grass.

"The Wellesley Van Dyck, sergeant!" she said triumphantly, unrolling the brown canvas cylinder. "You'll get the credit for this, at Scotland Yard, but I think Miss Chown should have the reward! For running the risk she did in acting as decoy! That brute might have killed her . . . as he did his confederate, Sefton. Or Edwards, rather. Sefton was merely an assumed name." She turned to Miss Chown, nursing a badly bruised cheek. "Thank you, my dear! I hope it doesn't hurt too much. It was the only way we could catch him, red-handed!" Again she glanced

Canterbury Cathedral Murder

at the furious prisoner, moaning dismally over his wounded arm. "I wouldn't have shot him, sergeant," she said, "if you'd been a little quicker on the up-take!"

"We got caught in the hedge," replied the officer, flushing. "I don't see how we are going to thank you, Miss Holmes. And if you don't mind my asking how you did it. . . ."

"Nothing simpler!" Shirley laughed. Like her distinguished father, she has a keen love for the dramatic. "I knew that Sefton had hidden something . . . something he'd most likely stolen. So this afternoon I glanced through the London newspapers for the past two weeks, checked up the important crimes. One of them was the theft of Lord Wellesley's Van Dyck, on the very day before this young fellow arrived in Canterbury. By two mechanics, doing plumbing repairs at his house. Having learned that this young man was a mechanic, I concluded he'd had the picture in his knapsack. And since a rolled-up canvas isn't an easy thing to hide, I could imagine no more likely place than a recess in that concrete step he so obligingly built for Mrs. Chown. This evening, while waiting for supper, I made some investigations, satisfied myself that the step was hollow . . . persuaded Miss Chown to upset it, with a crowbar, as soon as it was dark, and disclose the hiding place. I felt sure that this man, having killed Sefton, probably for double-crossing him, would watch the house, knowing quite well the picture must be hidden somewhere about the premises. And of course, Sergeant, that was why I didn't tell you, until I came to the station with Miss Chown late this afternoon, that Sefton had been murdered . . . it was necessary that his death should be regarded publicly as a suicide, in order not to scare the murderer away. . . ."

"Amazing!" the sergeant whispered. "Even your father, Miss Holmes, couldn't have handled the thing better. . . ."

"You think not?" smiled Shirley. "You're wrong. Dad would have known by now why this fellow in hiding, went to the Cathedral at all, today. That still is a mystery to me. You figure it out, Sergeant."

The sergeant stood staring after us, scratching his head in bewilderment.

YOU NEED HELP

Unless you are a trained interior decorator, there are times when you need help in choosing furniture, hangings, wall and floor coverings and accessories for your home. Whatever your furnishing problems may be, we would be glad to give you this help. Just write to the Home Beautiful Editor, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply.

MAKE THIS TELLING TEST!

RUB YOUR finger tips over your face. Press firmly. Give particular attention to your chin, forehead, around your mouth, and the little crevices beside your nose. Now! Is your skin absolutely smooth? Or do you feel tiny bumps and rough patches? If you do, you have Paralyzed Pores.

Your Cleansing Methods Paralyze the Pores Because They Do Not Let the Skin Breathe

When you massage a heavy, waxy cold cream into your pores you fill them with a sticky mixture of grease and dirt. The mixture hardens in the pores — plugs them up—paralyzes them. Then the skin, unable to breathe, becomes dry, coarse and muddy. The clogged pores become enlarged. Blackheads and heart-breaking blemishes appear.

How to Correct Paralyzed Pores. For Complete Results Just This One Cream is Necessary

The way to banish paralyzed pores is to use a cleansing method that is founded on a scientific knowledge of the skin and its requirements. Such a method is supplied in Lady Esther Four-Purpose Face Cream.

FIRST: This new cream melts the instant it touches the skin. It penetrates the pores to the bottom without enlarging them, dissolves the waxy accumulations and floats them to the surface where they are easily wiped off.

SECOND: It makes the pores so clean that fresh air rushes in and stimulates your tired skin. Thoroughly cleansed and revived, the pores naturally resume their normal size. Thus this cream corrects enlarged pores. No astringents are necessary.

THIRD: Lady Esther Cream resupplies the skin with a fine oil. That's why it banishes dryness and the withered look of age. You can forget about your skin foods.

FOURTH: This one cream keeps the skin so soft and smooth, powder clings perfectly. You do not need vanishing creams or powder bases.

Prove to Yourself What My Cream Will Do For Your Skin

Mail coupon below to me, and by return mail I will send you a proof tube of my famous Lady Esther Four-Purpose Face Cream. Use this tube as I direct. Then look in your mirror—you'll see an amazing difference. Your face will be softer and smoother than ever before. Lady Esther, 2020 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Ill.

ACCEPT FREE OFFER

(You can paste this on a penny postcard)

LADY ESTHER — MAIL NOW

2020 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Ill.

Please send me by return mail your 7-day tube of Lady Esther Four-Purpose Face Cream.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... *State*.....

How Joan got her "Movie Eyes"

MARY, THE BOYS SAY YOUR EYES ARE IRRESISTIBLE—HOW DO YOU DO IT?
—IT'S A TRICK STUDIO MAKE UP EXPERTS USE—CALLED DELICA-BROW I'LL FIX YOURS NOW...

JOAN THAT EVENING
HOW MYSTERIOUSLY BIG AND STARRY YOUR EYES ARE TONIGHT—THEY PUT A SPELL ON ME!
THOUGHT
YES—SPELLED D-E-L-I-C-A B-R-O-W

Have the Witching Eyes of the Movie Stars Tonight

You can make your eyes wells of *allure* ...get exactly the same effect the movie and stage stars do—*instantly!* Simply darken the lashes and brows with the wonderful make-up they use—called DELICA-BROW. In a few seconds DELICA-BROW makes your eyes look bigger, brighter... *irresistible.* Try it *tonight.* It's waterproof, too. Remember the name, *DELICA-BROW.* At all toilet goods counters and at the 10c stores.

DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A HOME?

Here are blue prints of special interest to home-builders:
Colonial House, 6 rooms and bath
Normandy House, 5 rooms and bath
Swiss Chalet, 5 rooms and bath
Italian House, 6 rooms, 2 baths
Modernistic with 5 rooms and bath
Spanish House, 5 rooms and bath

For each blue print that you want, send 3 cents to Tower Magazines, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

The MAKE-UP BOX

HEAVY fur coats and the new wool dresses are a problem to the woman who wants to be dainty at all times. But your problem is solved if you own one of the new attractive deodorant pencils. As smartly designed as a lipstick in a silver and blue case, this new deodorant pencil will grace any purse and can accompany you wherever you go. It is easy to use and will not harm your gowns. Though we use non-perspirants frequently, excitement, nervousness and the combination of wool and fur do seem to bring on perspiration which this new handy deodorant pencil will nullify.

An attractive deodorant pencil.

MANY a young and pretty face is belied by its owner's rough and wrinkled hands. Perhaps you can't tell a woman's age by her hands, but you can judge her fastidiousness by them. With the new creams and lotions on the market there is no need for roughened, reddened hands no matter how blustery the winter winds. A cream we've had great success with comes in a white jar with a pink and silver label and the cream is pale pink, too. It's a greaseless cream and is quickly absorbed by the skin leaving no sticky sensation whatever. Use it just before you leave the house, every time you wash your hands and at night—and you'll be surprised by their smoothness after just a week of faithful care. It's good for roughened elbows and knees, too, and we know a girl who used it on that roughened upper arm section with grand results.

For beautiful hands.

A GROUP of your favorite cosmetics is soon to come out in new jars and packages with a most attractive and bright color scheme—red-fluted bakelite caps and red and black labels. The new jars and bottles are designed in modern stream-line proportions. The honey and almond cream is ready in its new dress now and will be followed soon by cleansing cream, texture cream and toning cleanser.

AND we've just found out about a new facial cleanser which has special toning properties. Along with it comes a most unusual applicator, a little rubber fingertip mitten with short rubber bristles all over one side. You put a daub of the cream on the applicator—the bristly side, of course—and apply with light pressure in rotary, upward strokes. It tingles just a bit and leaves your skin rosy and glowing with the increased circulation. The jars are most attractive—white with blue caps and blue labels and the applicator is made of blue rubber. We found it particularly nice as a morning freshener. It's most inexpensive, too, and you'll want to try it just as soon as you possibly can. We feel sure you will enjoy using the applicator inasmuch as it is something new with which to apply cleansing cream and we all like new things.

Cleansing cream with an applicator.

A FAMOUS face powder, too, comes to us in a charming new box with a cover that snaps shut and a grand square puff with a taffeta back. Even if the powder weren't as exquisite as it is, you would want to own this peach and black powder box. The powder comes in a wide variety of shades including an evening shade that is marvelously flattering under artificial lights. You'll like the other tones, and the texture is grand—soft and smooth in the best powder tradition. It's the kind of powder every woman wants to own—and the kind of box—an ideal Christmas gift we'd say for anyone who appreciates nice things.

Salon face powder

If you would like to have some further information on all of the products described here, including names and prices, as well as other current beauty news, write to Beauty Editor, THE MAKE-UP BOX, care of Tower Magazines, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope and a copy of the December Make-Up Box will be sent to you immediately.

I Go Sleuthing

(*Continued from page* 35)

Fascinated, he pushed the car forward into the night. The highway changed to a dirt road; then at a fork in the road, the girl indicated a seldom used road—the left fork. It was all strange country to Jim. Once or twice, he stole a glance at his mysterious passenger. Her face was protected by the high collar of the coat, but he caught a glimpse of her eyes. They were strange, staring eyes.

They were riding through thickly wooded country. The trees pressed close to the road. Then, without a sound, the girl held up her hand. She was pointing through the trees. There, almost indiscernible amongst the trees, was an old house. A great rambling affair, almost lost in the darkness. He brought the car to a stop in the middle of the road—there was no room to pull over to the side—and waited for his passenger to alight.

She did not move. Disgusted, he got out of the car, in order to go around and open the door on the opposite side. At the rear of the car, he paused for a moment to light a cigarette. This thing was getting on his nerves. For a moment, the flare of the match blinded him. Then, he opened the door on her side of the roadster.

The girl was gone! He looked toward the porch of the house. She had completely vanished into the night. The actions of this strange creature made him curse himself for a fool. She hadn't even thanked him for the lift. He stalked up to the porch and pounded long and hard on the door. No one could kid him.

After some time, he heard padded footsteps from within. Slowly the heavy door swung open. An old man, clothed in a long, white nightgown stared out at him.

"Well?" the man asked. Jim noticed that his eyes were similar to the girl's he'd brought home.

"I picked up a young lady on the Licking River bridge," Jim explained. "She guided me to this house. When I went around the back of the car to let her out, she—disappeared. Do you know——"

Jim stopped. The old man was softly weeping. Finally he seemed to remember that the young man had asked a question.

"My boy," he said slowly, hesitatingly, "ten years ago tonight my daughter was killed on—that—bridge. Every year—every year since then, some one has brought her home! Just as you have brought her home tonight!" When the man finished speaking, he stood silently looking at Jim. Anguish was written in every line of his face.

Slowly and somberly, Jim Engels went back to the car, his mind trying to figure out this weird enigma. The more he thought of it, the more puzzled he became. It was uncanny!

In time, the family of Jim Engels had to move to another city, in order to get his mind off this affair. And it was some time later that I solved the mystery of the "Ghost Girl."

The old man's daughter *had* been killed on that bridge. Her death had affected the old man's mind. But he had *another* daughter. He failed to tell Jim Engels that fact. Every year, this younger daughter hailed a motorist on that bridge where her sister had been killed, and was brought home.

(*Please turn to page* 122)

"LURELESS LETTY"
Becomes the Most Popular Girl at the Party!

1
I'M SO DISCOURAGED— I DON'T SEEM TO ATTRACT THE BOYS — LACK SOMETHING, I SUPPOSE
HOW SILLY! YOU'VE SIMPLY LET YOURSELF BECOME A LITTLE CARELESS ABOUT YOUR APPEARANCE YOUR HAIR ESPECIALLY!
2
WHAT CAN I DO? I DON'T WANT TO PAY $2 FOR A FRESH WAVE EVERY TIME I HAVE A DATE!
EVER HEAR OF JO-CUR? YOU CAN WAVE YOUR HAIR YOURSELF MARVELOUSLY WITH JO-CUR — AND IT COSTS ABOUT A NICKEL! HERE, LET ME SHOW YOU RIGHT NOW . . .
3
IT'S JUST THE EFFECT I WANT—THE BEST WAVE I EVER HAD! AND ABOUT AS EASY AS COMBING THE HAIR!
WITH JO-CUR YOU CAN SUIT YOUR OWN PERSONALITY EXACTLY YOU LOOK MARVELOUS!
4
AT THE PARTY A FEW DAYS LATER
LETTY HAS GOT SO POPULAR LATELY A FELLOW CAN SCARCELY GET A DANCE . . . LOOKS LIKE A DAZZLING MOVIE STAR!
ISN'T SHE JUST RAVISHING?
THANKS TO THAT WONDERFUL JO-CUR, DEAR!

Have That "Ritzy" Fingerwave

in Your Own Home Tonight

NOTHING "lures" like lovely hair! Thanks to a marvelous new French discovery, today it is totally unnecessary *ever* to sacrifice charm by having hair straggly and unattractive. Indeed, it happens *you* can have the *same* wonderful fingerwaves that the famous stars of the stage and movies have. Set them yourself! Try JO-CUR Waveset—today!

With the big bottle of JO-CUR, for 25c, you get *5* perfect waves—each of which might cost you $2 or more at an expensive hairdresser's. Each lasts a *full week. And fingerwaving your hair with* JO-CUR *is about as quick and easy as combing it!*

Remember, JO-CUR is different from any other waveset known. JO-CUR is made with a *quince-seed* base *—not* cheap gum, which makes the hair gummy and sticky. JO-CUR will *not* leave white flakes. If you have a permanent, JO-CUR will preserve its beauty far longer . . . Double your "appeal"! Express *your* VIVID PERSONALITY—bring out *YOUR loveliness* as never before—TONIGHT!

Get your bottle of JO-CUR at any drug or department store, or, in the trial size, at the 10c store.

Jo-cur
PRONOUNCED "JOKER"
WAVESET

"Your Castile Shampoo is a Real Beauty Treatment for the Hair Congratulations Marchands!"

That's what women are saying about the wonderful new Castile Shampoo developed by Marchand's (makers of famous Marchand's Golden Hair Wash).

It's a Real Beauty Treatment for the Hair Because It—

1. Cleanses the scalp gently and thoroughly.
2. Does not dry out the scalp the way highly alkaline soaps do. Marchand's Castile Shampoo leaves the precious natural oils in the scalp, where they are needed.
3. Contains rich olive oil, nourishing to scalp.
4. Leaves hair exquisitely soft, easy to comb and manage.
5. Hair looks lustrous alive. The color of the hair is NOT lightened or changed in any way.
6. In perfect condition for waving or dressing.

Marchand's Castile Shampoo is the best thing you could use on children's tender scalps. Men who have dandruff or whose scalps tend to be dry should use NOTHING ELSE to wash their hair. The price is LOW.

Marchand's Castile Shampoo

If Your Druggist Hasn't Stocked It Yet—Get by Mail

For a Regular Sized Bottle. Fill out coupon; send with 35c (covers all charges) in coins or stamps to C. Marchand Co., 251 West 19th St., New York City.

Please send me your Shampoo—35c enclosed.

Name.....

Address.....City.....State.....

Druggist.....

Address.....

I Go Sleuthing

(*Continued from page* 121)

Her father knew nothing about it. She always managed to slip out of the car and get into the rear of the house, unknown to anyone. The dense trees around the house would make that possible.

The girl was a deaf mute. This explains her strange attitude in the car. And in her own, sort of childish mind, she thought she was doing something very helpful by having his dead daughter return to him the same night each year.

—*William Bogart, Cincinnati, Ohio.*

VISITING my friend, the undertaker, a curious looking, badly burned trunk, just arrived, elicited the following gruesome story—and my solution.

The little town of —— is one of the many ordinary towns with hilly farms and quite an old-fashioned residential city atmosphere. The majority of the town folk possess little wealth or property, but what they have is carefully cultivated, protected, and utilized.

"John Smith" was perhaps less prosperous than his neighbors because of his small acreage and family circumstances. He did have a splendid wheat crop this year, however, and proudly he prepared to reap benefit from what he had sown.

One night in the early part of August, nigh onto midnight, his home seemed to be getting unsufferably warm inside and the uncomfortable family sought the cause for the heat. They did not have far to look. High angry flames from the wheat fields nearby showed glaringly through the window. That anyone should hold any grudge against the farmer was unlikely. Neighbors rushed to aid in salvaging some part of the ready harvest, but the fire seethed onward to such an extent that the workmen found it impossible to get near it.

After tireless efforts with a long hose, and pails of water and smothering and stamping, the fire was finally overcome and the fields lay grotesque in their barren destruction. The face of the poor broken farmer showed utmost sorrow but all of a sudden his features and those of his young son flexibly reverted to those of dismay and horror. As they wonderingly peered toward the part of the field nearest the highway that curved around one side of his property, a black trunk, fully three and one-half feet high and five feet long loomed before them.

THE men that had fought the fire in a losing battle ran toward the trunk. It was of tin with tin imitation bands around it, but what caused the excitement was the fact that the trunk had been tightly bound with a strong clothesline and securely knotted. The fire had badly burned it but it still held its secret, whatever it was, within it. Just by luck the proper authorities had been at the scene of the fire and they now proceeded to loosen the bands. The sooted cover was lifted with difficulty. All bent over as if by a common command to view the interior. There lying on his side with his long legs pushed up in order to fit the trunk, was the half-charred body of a young man. He was attired in a cheap pair of shorts, and all signs of identification were unfortunately removed. His face was grotesquely burned and his reddish-blond hair was burned off in some places. The body lay on two large bed pillows without cases and beneath these were a bale of hay that half filled the trunk and a gallon gasoline can that was filled to the brim. The can had been put inside to explode when the trunk became hot enough. The quick action of the neighbors of Mr. "Smith" had alone saved the igniting of the fluid which would have made the case more difficult.

After the proper notations the trunk was removed to my friend the undertaker's. As the embalmer examined the body he found a shot through the back of the head. This he said had been clearly made with a common .32 caliber revolver. No other clues were offered within the trunk except a missing back tooth in the dead man's mouth that was still intact in spite of his burned face and a new but dirty pair of woman's gloves. These gloves were found between the pillows.

THE authorities searched for footprints, tire tracks and other clues but the killer and corpse were unknown. After much investigation—and many people viewed the dead man in the hope that it was some "lost" dear one—one woman said that she couldn't believe it would be her husband although the hair and missing tooth were nearly identical with her husband's. He had run off with the wife of an Italian in a town some thirty miles away. This was a live clue and was followed up only to lead to the discovery that her husband was still living when she received word about him in a far-distant part of the country. Her husband did not appear then, however, and nothing had been seen or heard of him since.

The authorities were finally forced to abandon the case. There seemed to be no solution to it.

Meanwhile, I am trying my hand as a sleuth. It may be that my theory as advanced will not prove true, but from certain facts I can show how my various deductions cannot be far wrong.

IN the first place this murder was no gangster's job. Gangsters do not carry thirty-two caliber revolvers nor go to such pains to cover up their various crimes.

Those lady's gloves I do not believe to have been "planted" there as too much sentiment was evidenced in the preparation of the trunk coffin. A soft bed of hay was provided and pillows for the head. The hair was patted neatly over the badly disfigured head and face and the gloves were beneath the pillow by the head where a woman might have set the head to rest. Then, too, the artful killers did not set the can of gasoline afire, but left that for the general fire to do. Furthermore, the Italian and his wife had left three weeks ago for a vacation! He could have come home on the night that the victim disappeared and shot him unsuspectingly in the back of the head while his wife was there. He could have forced her to aid him in the disposal of her lover which would have proved my theory of the sentimental burial. As the two of them journeyed afar the Italian could mail word anonymously to this other woman that her husband was seen.—*Etheleyne Verjinea Grafton, Glen Ellyn, Ill.*

Riddle of the Flea Circus

(*Continued from page* 21)

But the General was not on duty at the entrance to the flea tent, to take the dimes of the crowd. At that moment he was leaning over a police alarm box, pounding on the metal door.

IT was the pleasant custom of Inspector Oscar Piper, of the New York homicide squad, to call at the close of the day for his very good friend and occasional partner in crime detection, Miss Hildegarde Withers. Jefferson School is only a few blocks north of the grim police mansion at Centre Street, and the two strangely assorted friends would often share a taxi northward toward their homes and dinners.

They shared one now, rocketing up toward the bright lights of the theater section of Manhattan; but, suddenly, Miss Withers was amazed to see the Inspector leap from the cab as it paused for a light, and go at a surprisingly good pace down the street.

If he gave her a farewell, it was lost in the din of the city. Hildegarde Withers rescued his hat, her own brief case and umbrella, and paid off the driver. Then she followed after the fiery little man whom she had once almost married—an old-fashioned sailing vessel in the wake of a bouncing tug.

She arrived at the alarm box in time to hear a small, round gentleman, whose curly hair rose like a soft nimbus around his face, as he incoherently gasped of riot and bloody murder down the street. "Oi, it's terrible!"

"You stay here," the Inspector told her. But there was one direction in which the authority of Oscar Piper did not extend. The angular spinster followed close behind as the little man led them down the street and into the Flea Circus.

Elsie stared at them through the ticket window, but they did not pause. Texas Joe, the Snake Prince, was stirring up his pets with a stick, and turned to gaze after the newcomers as they hurried past.

But for all their hurry, there was no riot in the main hall of the Flea Circus. Max Jurgen, the spieler, hurried toward them. "Manny, it's time for your show," he greeted their guide.

"But I thought—Ajax——"

The spieler grinned, and gestured toward the platform where Ajax was putting away his knives. The crowd was peacefully spending nickels at the soda-pop stand, peering into the peep-shows and at the various two-headed calves in formaldehyde which decorated the room, and otherwise whiling away the time.

"We did have a slight interruption," admitted Max Jurgen. "A drunk took a sock at Ajax, and some dame got scared. But the big fellow wouldn't hit back—he's timid as a lamb." He stopped, and looked at Piper through appraising eyes. "You a policeman?"

"I'll do until one comes along," said the Inspector. He showed the spieler a badge of solid gold. "Happened to be passing, and saw our friend here trying to break into an alarm box."

Max Jurgen nodded. "Well, sorry you had your trip for nothing. I see your lady friend is interested in our little place here. Too bad the show is about over. . . ."

(*Please turn to page* 124)

Still... it's her Eyes

THAT MAKE HER SO COMPLETELY... SO IRRESISTIBLY...

SO RAVISHINGLY *fascinating*

Lovely figure, beautifully gowned . . poise and style . . yet, withal, just another mannequin unless her *eyes* express the fascinating charm of her own unique personality.

She knows well how important is the appearance of long, dark lashes, delicately shaded lids, and graceful, expressive eyebrows, to bring out all the alluring beauty and depth of expression in her eyes. Like five million other clever women, she achieves this natural-appearing loveliness quickly and easily with the famous Maybelline eye beauty aids.

Don't let pale, scanty lashes, blank-looking eyelids, and scraggly brows rob you of the glamorous beauty that can be so easily yours with these exquisite yet inexpensive Maybelline preparations.

A few simple brush strokes of Maybelline Eyelash Darkener will instantly transform your lashes into the appearance of long, dark, luxuriant fringe. Tear-proof, non-smarting, and absolutely harmless, it keeps the lashes soft and silky. Delicately shade your eyelids with Maybelline Eye Shadow and see how the color of your eyes is deepened and intensified. Form lovely, expressive eyebrows with the smooth-marking Maybelline Eyebrow Pencil. Now behold...! Your eyes have become twin pools of alluring beauty, expressing your every mood with irresistible charm.

Encourage the natural growth of your lashes by applying Maybelline Eyelash Grower nightly before retiring. Stimulating and beneficial, it is, like all the Maybelline eye beauty aids, absolutely pure and harmless. Try these four effective aids to eye beauty today. They are obtainable in purse sizes at all leading 10c stores.

Black and Brown

Black and Brown

Blue, Brown, Blue-grey
Violet and Green

Colorless

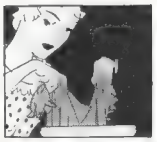
Maybelline

EYE BEAUTY PREPARATIONS

New Discovery Takes Out Color Like Magic!

Harmless as Boiling Water

Fast colors—even jet black—can now be removed like magic, without harming fabrics in the slightest! And all through the use of an amazing product available for home use everywhere! It is known as White RIT.



You can easily take out all the old color . . . even black . . . with White RIT. It never harms the fabric. Also removes those stubborn spots and stains!

Simply drop a White RIT wafer in boiling water, put in the goods from which you want to remove the color, stir, and in a jiffy all color will disappear. Even the water stays colorless!

Now rinse your dress in a bright shade of New INSTANT RIT. Not a soap any more . . . but a new powder wafer that dyes in the rinse!

Also Takes Out Spots and Stains

It's marvelous for removing mildew, yellowness caused by washing, ink spots, grass stains, rust . . . never harms the fabric. Diapers come out soft and snowy white, too.

Use White RIT to take old, faded color out of dresses, hosiery, underthings, curtains, draperies—any article unevenly faded, or sun-streaked.

Look how RIT dyes every thread, even the seams *through and through*. And a special patented ingredient prevents streaking . . . gives you beautiful, even color.

After the color has been removed it is easy to put in any fashionable new color you like with Instant RIT.

See RIT color card with its 33 smart colors at your dealer's. White RIT and Instant RIT are on sale everywhere.

WHITE RIT

Removes All Colors —HARMLESSLY

GEORGE: Come home

I didn't mean the things I said. I'm sorry. My nerves were on edge. It must have been my old feet that made me say what I did. I'm a different person now—No more corns for me. I discovered *Blue-Jay. Forgive me George—come back.

*Blue-Jay—the scientific Corn Remover by Bauer & Black, surgical dressing house. Pain stops instantly—Corn gone in 3 days.

Write Bauer & Black, Department TM 12 2500 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, for free booklet and interesting foot exercise pictures.

Riddle of the Flea Circus

(*Continued from page* 123)

Miss Hildegarde Withers, who had been making a cursory survey of the hall, came toward them. The Inspector knew by the flaring curve of her nostrils that something was up.

"The show isn't over," she said softly. "It's just begun." She clutched the Inspector's arm, and spoke lowly enough so that only he could hear. "Look, Oscar—underneath the platform where the strong man is standing." She pointed into the shadows.

Oscar Piper looked. Then he whipped a pocket flash from his coat, and looked again. "Somebody under there, I can see the soles of his shoes," he said slowly. "Say——"

With Miss Withers close behind, the Inspector walked straight toward the platform. As they approached, the school teacher took a wide step to avoid a trickle of bright scarlet which was running out along a crack in the floor. She drew back, but the Inspector dropped to his knees. Suddenly, every eye in the room was on him.

Slowly and carefully he drew from the recess beneath the platform the body of a stocky man in a gray suit. From between his shoulder blades protruded the wooden handle of a butcher knife, and there was a dark splotch on the rough woolen material. He was quite dead, but when they turned him over his eyes were still narrow and thoughtful.

The Inspector sprang back to block the rush toward the doorway. "No you don't! Nobody leaves!" He sought his ally. "Miss Withers—get to a phone and turn in an alarm—precinct, headquarters, everybody!"

He unbuttoned his coat. "Who was the guy who said I'd had my trip for nothing?"

THE sallow-faced assistant medical examiner straightened up and closed his black bag with a snap. "I'm through," he announced cheerfully. "Death was instantaneous, caused by seven inches of steel rammed through his trapezius muscle, glancing off the backbone and into the heart. No chance of suicide, even if he'd been a contortionist. And no need for a banquet, if you ask me."

That was Dr. Levin's pet name for the gruesome formality of the autopsy. He bade Miss Withers a polite good evening and withdrew, followed almost immediately by the two official police photographers.

A little circle of precinct detectives and finger-print men still swarmed about the body, like flies in a summer pasture. Sergeant Peters, grim and methodical, turned to his superior.

"No prints on the knife, Inspector. But it's a dead ringer for the ones in the strong man's set."

The Inspector nodded. He was staring down at the dead man. "Funny there wasn't a piece of paper or anything in his pockets to identify him. And doubly funny that nobody here admits knowing him."

Miss Hildegarde Withers, who had been roaming idly about the empty hall, rejoined him. "Unusual haircut, don't you think!" She stared, fascinated, at the corpse.

"You mean cut short with the clippers above the ears? Yeah, I noticed that. He must be a hick from the tall grass somewhere," hazarded Piper.

"But he isn't tanned," objected Miss Withers. The Inspector did not hear her. Detective Sergeant Moran was approaching.

"I got statements from everybody who was here when the lights went out," said that worthy. "None of 'em told us anything we didn't know. I let the visitors go, like you said, after we'd got their names and addresses. D'you want to talk to the people who work here regular?"

"Might as well," said the Inspector. "Send 'em out one at a time—this guy who calls himself General Orloff has his name outside, so send him here first."

The frightened, fuzzy-haired little man who had first sounded the alarm was let out of the crowded office. The voices of the other inmates followed him, demanding freedom.

"Any place we can talk quietly?" asked the Inspector. The General led the way into his own precinct, the canvas-walled booth of the flea show. The walls, Miss Withers noted, were covered with colored and enlarged portraits of fleas engaged in playing the piano, dancing a waltz, and even meeting with pistols upon the field of honor.

In the center of the small enclosure was a marble-topped table, with a brass rail to protect it from the public. Upon this table stood six or seven large mother-of-pearl boxes.

Miss Withers was ready with her pencil and notebook, while the Inspector fussed with a match at the dead end of his cigar. Suddenly he wheeled on the little man.

"What's your real name?"

"Manny Silver," was the prompt reply. "The 'General'—that's just sort of honorary, y'understand."

"You own this dump?"

"Not exactly. Max Jurgen and me, we run it for the General—the real General. He lives in Paris. But there's four troupes of trained fleas, one at the Fair in Chi, one in Phillie, and this—each has to have a General Orloff, see?"

"I see. Suppose you tell us just what happened when the lights went out. Unless you were in here and didn't see anything."

"I saw all there was to see," said Silver. "Between shows I make a little extra by working as a checker expert, outside at the table with the other two experts. Sort of doubling in brass, y'see. So when it happened, I heard a dame scream, and I ran out to get the cops. Only first the drunk tried to sock Ajax. . . . " The little man gave a sketchy account of the events leading up to the tragedy.

Finally the Inspector halted him. "And so you never saw the stiff before, eh? Well, somebody did."

"And that somebody is the murderer," put in Miss Withers.

"Okay, Silver, you can go." The Inspector leaned across the rail and touched the cover of one of the mother-of-pearl boxes. "By the way, what's in here?"

A frenzied hand seized his wrist. "Oi, Inspector! Not that box! You must not open it—the trained fleas are in there. They'll get out!"

The Inspector hastily withdrew his hand. "Okay. I'll take your word for it. My dog already has trouble enough without my bringing home any trained ones. Beat it, now—and on your way out ask Sergeant Moran to step in."

Riddle of the Flea Circus

"One moment," interposed Miss Withers. "You might ask the er—General, if he has ever made a trip to Germany, or contemplated such a trip?"

The little man paused in the doorway. "Germany? Sure, I was there with a touring freak show once. But now"—he made a wide gesture—"now I got reasons why I keep away." He left them with alacrity.

"Check him off the list of suspects," said the Inspector. "Wrong type for homicide. He might chisel a little, but never use a knife."

Piper went to the doorway. "Moran! Where in blazes are you?"

After a long interval the Sergeant appeared. "Sorry, Inspector, but I just was talking to Elsie, the blonde who works the ticket window."

"Business or pleasure?"

"In the line of duty, Inspector. And she remembered one thing—when the guy who got murdered walked in here, he hung around outside a while first. And he dropped a letter in the letter-box!"

THE Inspector's eyes widened. "A letter! Why, that'd tell us his name! Hustle outside and camp beside that letter box until the collector gets there to open it. Hurry, man!"

"That's what I did," confessed the Sergeant. "He came just a moment ago. And when I tried to look at the letters he said I was interfering with the United States mails. He said that unless I showed him another envelope addressed like the one we wanted I couldn't get it anyhow. . . ."

The Inspector snapped into action. "Under the law, a letter is the property of the sender until it reaches its destination. Well, that letter is the property of the dead man, and as such is under my jurisdiction. Besides, I know the postmaster. You follow that collector down to the Post Office, and I'll see that when you get there you have permission to bring back postman, bag and all. . . ."

"I might suggest that you save a lot of trouble by looking for a letter addressed to Germany, or written in German script," said Miss Withers. Inspector Piper stared at her, and then nodded. The Sergeant left at a trot.

"The dead man wore, not a hick haircut, but a German military style trim," Miss Withers pointed out. "A farmer would have been tanned by wind and sun."

The Inspector hurried away to call the postmaster, leaving Miss Withers alone. She made sure that no one could see into the canvas enclosure, and then that impulsive and curious lady leaned across the rail and seized upon the largest of the mother-of-pearl boxes.

She had a moment's trouble with the catch, and then gingerly lifted the lid. She almost dropped box and all as eight sinister and long-bodied fleas leaped high into the air from their bed of soft cotton, failing to alight upon her inquiring face only because each was bound around the middle with a microscopic gold wire which connected with a heavier one, slave-galley fashion. Miss Withers squeaked a little. Then, forcing her courage, she lifted them out of the box, cotton and all.

Underneath the packing was a nickel police badge, a German passport issued

(*Please turn to page* 126)

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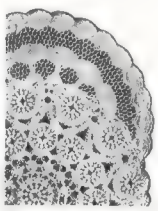

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Riddle of the Flea Circus

(*Continued from page* 125)

in the name of Otto Krall, and a crumpled letter of credentials requesting that the police of America cooperate with Ober-Polizist Krall in any possible manner. There was also a hotel key, labeled Room 607.

Soberly Miss Withers replaced the cotton and the hysterical dancing insects. Then she closed the cover of the box. She knew that in her hands she held the personal papers of the man who had come into the Flea Circus to be killed that afternoon. The one who had put them here had taken no chances of the corpse being identified.

As soon as the Inspector hung up the phone he was besieged with pleas for freedom, with questions and threats and demands.

"I'll take you one at a time," he told them.

THE Hartford Twins were standing impatiently. "I don't see how you're going to question *us* one at a time," said Mary acidly. Her sister cut in. "I didn't stab anybody, and if Mary had stabbed anybody I'd know it, wouldn't I?"

"Never mind that," said the Inspector, a little out of his depth. He beckoned to Max Jurgen, who had waited with a patience and a silence quite foreign to his nature. The spieler eagerly rose to follow them, but the way to the door was barred by a small and pleading girl in a white rubber bathing suit beneath her flimsy wrapper.

"Listen," demanded Annabel Lee. "You got to listen to me now. Take me instead of him, and let me get out of here!"

There was something oddly appealing in the girl's face. Miss Withers turned toward Piper, but he shook his head.

"Take your time," he told the girl. "You'll have your chance in a minute." And he led the way out of the office and across the empty hall to the booth at the farther side. Miss Withers was very near to telling him of what she held in her handbag, but there was no chance for that now.

"Just one or two things I want to ask you," began the Inspector. "You're the manager of this place, and you ought to know something of the people who work here. Who could have pulled this job?"

Jurgen shook his head. "It was an outside job, Inspector. Just because somebody worked off an old grudge on a man who happened to wander in here, we get blamed for it."

"Anybody among the performers who was ever in Germany?" asked Miss Withers.

Jurgen flashed a glance of recognition for a moment. "I know what you're thinking," he said. "Ajax comes from Germany. But that's nothing—every one of us has been over there on tour at one time or another. The Twins, Texas Joe, the General—even the soda-pop boy. I been there twice. But just because the stiff looks Dutch. . . ."

The Inspector drew a blood-stained knife from his pocket. "Ever see this before?"

Jurgen nodded. "It's one of Ajax's knives. But anybody could have got hold of it. . . ."

"Not everybody would have had the strength to drive it seven inches into the back of a man," said Piper.

Jurgen still shook his head. "I know you're suspecting Ajax," he said. "Just because he had the weapon and the opportunity. But for anybody who knows Ajax, that's a laugh. There never was a gentler guy in the world. He's such a coward that he'll jump if you yell boo at him. That's why Annabel won't give him a tumble. The drunk could have hit him a dozen times, and Ajax wouldn't hurt him. . . ."

Jurgen lowered his voice. "You see, I happen to know why Ajax is so afraid of using his strength. He killed a man once—a French waiter named Dupuy in a Dresden cafe a couple of years ago. It was a fight, but Ajax forgot his strength and broke the fellow's neck. He got off, but ever since then he's been scared to death for fear he'll do it again. Why, Ajax would be the last guy on earth to commit murder."

"Got that, Hildegarde?" asked the Inspector. She nodded, thoughtfully.

Piper rubbed his chin. "All right, Jurgen. Thanks for the information. I'd appreciate it if you'd stick around, though. . . ."

Jurgen grinned. "Even if the place is closed, I usually sleep on a couch in my office," he said. "Besides, Annabel might need me for something. . . ."

As he left them, Piper saw Sergeant Moran, red-faced and puffing, coming down the corridor.

"I see you're empty handed," he observed as the man came up to them.

"Yes, sir, I mean, no, sir." Moran fumbled in his pocket, and produced a long white envelope, stamped but not cancelled.

"Is this the one, sir?" It was addressed to Herr Franz Holm, Polizei Haus, Dresden, Germany. Piper tore it savagely across the end, puzzled over the single sheet of paper for a moment, and then handed it to Miss Withers.

"Remember any of your German?" he asked.

She studied it for a moment. "Not much—but enough to get the meaning of this. It's a daily report of one Otto Krall, detective, to his superior officer. 'I have traced the murderer of Dupuy to a Fliege-Circus . . . (that means *fly*, by the way) in this city, and shall make an arrest as soon as I can arrange extradition. . . .'"

The Inspector whistled softly. He whistled again as Miss Withers showed him documents which she had unearthed at the bottom of the mother-of-pearl box.

"I wonder," he said slowly, "I wonder if Ajax the Wonder Man had an opportunity to sneak across the room after the murder and before the discovery of the body, and hide these here?"

"I wonder, too," agreed Miss Withers. But the Inspector was already half way across the room.

"Moran," he called. "Peters! Get what uniformed men we have, and come with me." He paused outside the door of the office, and gave hurried instructions to his force. Then he opened the door.

"All right, everybody," he announced cheerily. "That's all for tonight. You can all of you go—but don't try to leave town."

The mob surged past him—the Twins first, then the two girls from the

Riddle of the Flea Circus

Marble Venus act, Elsie the ticket blonde, Texas Joe, Annabel Lee . . . and finally, the brawny bare shoulders of Ajax.

"Now," said Piper softly.

As the blond giant passed through the doorway, steel gripped his thick wrists, steel that clicked tight about them. He turned his mild blue eyes down in consternation to see himself handcuffed to Officers Burke and O'Hara.

"You're under arrest for the murder of Detective Otto Krall," intoned Piper. "Go along easy with the boys, and if you're wise you'll make a statement as soon as you get to the station."

THE two detective-sergeants had their service pistols ready, but there was no need for them. Ajax blinked, shook his head, and tried to hold back. But the officers manacled to his wrists pushed on.

The shrill laughter of a girl cut through the tensity of the scene. Annabel Lee had stopped to stare.

"You!" she gasped. Then her laughter rang out again. She turned to Miss Withers. "Him! For the love of——"

Piper was still in command. "Take him down to the precinct station, boys. Don't wait for the wagon, better put him in a cab. I'll be along directly."

Staring back at the girl as if even now he expected her to perform a miracle and save him, Ajax went meekly along with his captors. It was Max Jurgen who remembered to throw an overcoat across the bare shoulders.

"General" Silver appeared from somewhere to rub his hands together sadly. "Such a good knife-thrower he was, too," he complained. "Such trouble we'll have to get another like him!"

"Who'd want another like him?" the Inspector queried.

Miss Withers noticed that Annabel Lee had left off laughing, and was looking down the hall with a strange expression, a look almost of admiration, in her eyes. "To think that big dumb sheep had nerve enough——" she was saying.

He disappeared into a taxicab, with an officer on either side, and a sergeant on the running board. The Inspector handed over the knife, the dead man's papers, and the letter in German to Morgan. "Take these along downtown," he ordered. "If there are any newspaper men outside, tell 'em I'll give out the story down there in an hour or so."

The crowd was rapidly thinning out. General Silver shook hands with Piper and hurried off to his dinner. Annabel Lee disappeared into the dressing-room to remove the whiting which covered her body, and Miss Withers stood, very thoughtfully, watching the Inspector.

"It was clear enough to me after what you told me about Ajax's little trouble in Dresden two years ago," Piper was saying to Max Jurgen. "I wonder if you'd mind running through the details again, just to refresh my memory? I'm going to hand over the case to the district attorney's office tonight. Miss Withers here will take it down in shorthand."

Jurgen nodded amiably, but Miss Withers shook her head. "You'll have to excuse me a moment," she said, and disappeared into the dressing-room.

(*Please turn to page* 128)

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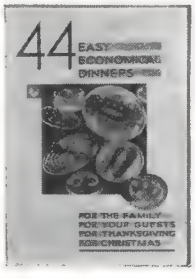

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Riddle of the Flea Circus

(*Continued from page* 127)

Annabel Lee was sitting on a bench, smoking a cigarette with trembling fingers. Miss Withers crossed to the mirror and began to tidy her hair. She turned, to see the whitened girl watching her.

"That looks like terrible stuff to get off," observed the school teacher.

Annabel shrugged. "You get used to it. I don't mind when I only work in one act, but doubling between the Marble Venus and the knife act is tougher. I usually stand under the shower for a while, and then use cold cream for the rest of it." She slipped out of her bathing suit, pulled a rubber cap over her hair, and climbed under the spray.

WHEN she came out, Miss Withers was washing her hands at the basin. Annabel's young body was streaked with dirty white, and she sat down with a towel and a jar of cream.

"When I toured in Germany," said the girl conversationally, "it was just after the war, and cold cream was three dollars a jar. I had to use soap and elbow grease."

"Did you meet Ajax over there?" Miss Withers wanted to know. Annabel shook her head.

"Listen," she began. "Do you——"

"Do I what?" Miss Withers was very casual.

"Oh, nothing."

"Do I really think Ajax committed the murder?"

Annabel looked up, startled. "Yes, that's what I was going to ask. But——"

"Yes, they seem to have a tight case against him," said the school teacher. "Why do you ask? Don't you think so? He had time to leap off the stand when the lights were out, knife the man, throw the body underneath, and be back in place when they went on. The drunk could have been a plant."

"He could have been an accident," said Annabel. "It happens often enough in this dump. But if Ajax did do the murder, then why"—she was plainly puzzled—"why did he want me to chuck this job and go back to the old country with him? If he knew they were looking for him over there. . . ."

Miss Withers shrugged. "Maybe Ajax wasn't bright enough to think of that?" But Annabel shook her head, and applied another gob of cream to her shoulders.

"Ajax isn't always as dumb as he looks," she said. "Once in a while he surprises you."

"How did he get along with the other men in the show?" Miss Withers asked confidentially. "I mean, with Jurgen and the General and the others?"

"He was friendly enough with Jurgen, except where I was concerned," said Annabel complacently. "They were both on the make for me, but I didn't give either of them a tumble. Ajax has the looks and Jurgen has the brains, but I want a man with both. As for the General, Ajax was always having an argument with him. They used to fight like cats and dogs. Ajax believed in some German named Hitler, and the General couldn't stand him."

Annabel started to climb into her clothes, and Miss Withers moved toward the door. "Child, you've given me the germ of an idea," she said, and went out.

She found Piper with his feet on the desk in Jurgen's office. The spieler was putting his signature to a typed statement.

"Well, Hildegarde," said the Inspector as she entered, "Mr. Jurgen has given me everything we need. This whole business can go before the grand jury next week. This is one case that was broken according to the rules, eh?"

"Indeed, yes," said the school teacher. She was praying desperately for a break. A wild fantastic plan was forming in her mind, needing but one completing link in the chain. . . .

And then the telephone rang. Max Jurgen reached for it and the Inspector slid his feet from the desk, but Hildegarde Withers was ahead of both of them.

It was Detective Sergeant Peters at the other end of the line. "Quick—is the Inspector there?"

Miss Withers was averse to lying, but she ignored her conscience and answered—"Busy—but I'll take the message."

"Tell him Ajax escaped when we were taking him out of the taxi," came Peters' excited voice. "Snapped the cuffs and then threw both cops at me. When we got up he was gone—for God's sake, ask the Inspector what do we do now?"

"Thank you very much," said Miss Withers politely, and hung up the phone. Avoiding the eager eyes of the two who watched her, the spinster school teacher stared for a moment at the opposite wall, where there hung an unpleasant lithograph of Roscoe, the Three Legged Boy, in the act of kicking a football.

She licked her lips. "We have to start all over again," she said. "That was the precinct desk captain. Ajax has proved that at the time that Dresden murder was committed he was in jail in Munich! So they've turned him loose."

"What! They couldn't have. . . ." The Inspector's voice trailed away as he saw the glare in Miss Withers' bright blue eyes. Perhaps it was his imagination, but he thought he saw one of her lids drop, and lift again. . . . She turned toward the spieler.

Max Jurgen was tasting this news. He licked his wide lips, but he did not speak.

"So whatever Ajax told you about killing a French waiter named Dupuy was pure fiction," continued the school teacher. "He couldn't possibly have been there."

Max Jurgen nodded, thoughtfully. "But you see, he didn't tell me, exactly. I got the information from a newspaper clipping. . . ."

"You haven't the clipping, I presume?"

Jurgen shook his head. "I'm afraid not . . . why?"

"I JUST happened to think," said the school teacher sweetly, "that it was about time that you explained how you knew so much about the murder of an obscure French waiter in a little Dresden cafe two years ago. Unless——" Her meaning was unmistakable.

Max Jurgen looked at the Inspector, who was frowning at his dead cigar. Then his face brightened.

"Wait a minute!" he said. "I think I did put that clipping away somewhere——" He pulled out a lower drawer of his desk, and fumbled among

ledgers and old photographs. "It ought to be here. . . ."

Then the honey went out of his voice, and he turned on them with a squat black automatic in his hand. "Get over against the wall, both of you!" he rasped.

Drops of perspiration were running down his forehead, and a grayish-yellow film seemed to obscure his eyes. "Quick!" he ordered. "I won't hang any higher for four stiffs than for two. And keep your hands up!"

Oscar Piper hadn't carried a gun since he laid aside his uniform. He backed over beside Miss Withers, his teeth meeting in the butt of his cigar.

Jurgen was edging toward the door, but he paused long enough to jerk the telephone wire from its box.

MISS HILDEGARDE WITHERS realized that she had bitten off a good deal more than she could chew. This was no problem in criminology, no case in deduction and reasoning. Here stood a man, twice-trapped in murder, and desperate.

His hand was on the door-knob. "I'm standing outside to count thirty," said Max Jurgen. "If anybody comes through, I'll blow him to hell and gone."

Miss Withers felt Oscar Piper tense his muscles. "You can't get by with it," said the Inspector through clenched teeth. "We'll get you sooner or later."

He drew a breath, and the school teacher realized that he was about to spring forward in the dive that is taught to every rookie copper by jiu jitsu experts imported from Nippon. But the murderer still held the gun steady.

"*No*, Oscar!" cried Miss Withers, and clung to his arm. At that moment there came the sound of light, clicking footsteps outside, and a tap at the door.

It was the voice of Annabel Lee. "Ready to eat, Maxie?" she called, Jurgen fumbled for the key, but before he could lock it, the girl swung it open. "What's the——Max!" Her eyes were wide as saucers.

His hand caught her neck, and jerked her into the room on her hands and knees. Then he sprang swiftly through and the key turned on the outside.

Annabel rose to her feet, bewildered. "Why, of all the——"

But the Inspector thrust her savagely to one side, and threw his weight against the door. It burst outward, and he sprang through the opening. The two women followed him, clinging to each other. They rushed to the corridor. . . .

THERE was supposed to be a uniformed man on duty at the far entrance. "Toole," shouted the Inspector. "Toole, stop him!"

The footsteps echoed down the long corridor, as Max Jurgen sprinted for freedom. Beyond him, the three could see a blue-clad figure. But Officer John Toole was in no position to stop anybody. A blow from the brawny fist of Ajax the Wonder Man put him out of the picture.

Ajax was coming on, his brawny bulk blocking the passage. Annabel shrilled above the Inspector's hoarse orders. "Ajax—Ajax—stop him!"

Ajax simply stood there, a bewild-

(*Please turn to page* 130)

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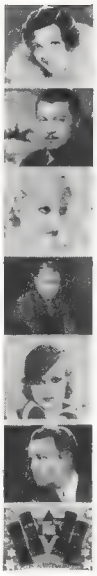

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Riddle of the Flea Circus

(*Continued from page 129*)

ered, incongruous figure in leopard skin and an old overcoat. From his wrists dangled broken manacles, and there was blood on his forehead.

"Ajax, *do* something!" There was infinite pleading in Annabel's voice.

Jurgen had paused only a second. Now he was plunging on. His gun roared twice—and glass tinkled in the ticket booth. He fired again, but Ajax did not fall.

The strong man plunged, swifter than one of his own flung knives, and the two men met head-on.

"Hold him," yelled Piper, and sprinted for all he was worth. He saw Jurgen twisting, fighting . . . and the heavy gun came down again and again on Ajax's skull.

THEN the strong man got his hold. Bracing his mighty frame, he lifted Max Jurgen high into the air and then flung him, blindly, down the hall.

There was a sickening crash of wood and wire as the murderer plunged head-first into the low square of canvas where Texas Joe, the Snake Prince, kept his loathsome pets. Miss Withers stopped, and turned her head away, for from three smashed containers poured forth the mottled, muddy rattlesnakes, twining their thick bodies around this invader. There was a buzz of angry rattles, and a tapping of padded, stinging hammers against his body, his throat, his face. . . .

Max Jurgen screamed once, and then was oddly silent. The Inspector brought Toole, still dizzy from the crack Ajax had given him when he tried to bar the entrance, and together they managed to lift the inert man from his resting place among the disturbed snakes.

He was stretched out on the floor, and the Inspector bent over him with a pocket mirror. There was no film across the glass. . . .

"Why, the man's dead!"

Miss Withers, frightened and breathless as she was, had not been able to tear herself away. She approached closer now.

"But Oscar—these snakes are supposed to have had their venom removed. It says so on the sign. And besides, rattlesnake poison can't kill as quickly as that."

All the same, Max Jurgen was dead. The assistant medical examiner, dragged back from his own fireside for the second time that evening, pronounced it *cardiac failure.*

"Which means exactly what?" Miss Withers asked him.

Dr. Levin shrugged. "Heart failure can mean anything," he admitted. "My own personal opinion is that he was scared to death."

AJAX THE WONDER MAN lay in a private room at Bellevue, with fourteen stitches in his scalp and two forty-five caliber holes through his shoulder, neatly bandaged. Beside him, where she had been during the long ride on the ambulance and the long half hour in the emergency room, was Annabel Lee.

"And you did it all for me!" she told him tenderly. Ajax nodded, a peaceful smile on his placid face. His hated leopard-skin hung in the hospital closet, but he knew he would never don it again.

"We go back to the old country when I get up—maybe tomorrow," he promised.

The Inspector and Miss Withers tiptoed out of the room. They had come to tell Ajax that no charges would be brought against him for having attacked half a dozen cops. After all, none of the boys was seriously hurt.

"I don't want it in the papers that a murder suspect cleaned up half the force, even if Ajax is a strong man," the Inspector told Miss Withers. They were riding down in the elevator. "All's well that ends well," he went on. "But all the same, dear lady, your somewhat theatrical methods came very near going wrong and making me the laughing stock of the town."

"It was that or nothing," Miss Withers offered tartly. "You were sending an innocent man to jail without a shadow of doubt crossing your mind. And I had nothing on Jurgen except a suspicion, and he knew it. His defense of Ajax, you see, was just a little too pat. He only offered it, you remember, when he had already heard you phone to the postmaster, and knew that we would eventually read the letter written by the German detective. We were supposed to be convinced then—and you were.

"But, Oscar, he overplayed his hand. The rumpus with the drunk could have been an accident and probably was. But the lights went out and stayed out for quite a long time. Ajax could not have arranged that from where he was standing in full view of the crowd. But nobody was watching Jurgen. . . ."

"Anyway," said the Inspector as he hailed a cab, "the snakes saved the sovereign state of New York the expense of a trial and execution, with the help of Ajax. Just why did the big fellow come tearing back, anyhow? Did he suspect Jurgen, and get worried over leaving his girl there with the murderer?"

HILDEGARDE WITHERS shook her head. "I don't think such an idea ever occurred to him until he came into the corridor and saw Jurgen with the gun and us screaming after him. But he didn't come back for that, I'm pretty certain."

"Too bad you didn't ask him what he did come back for, then," said Piper.

Miss Withers smiled. "That's just what I did," she confided. "When Annabel went to get him a glass of water just now. I came right out and asked him why he broke away from your men and fought his way back to the Flea Circus."

"Well, what did he say?" demanded Piper.

"You see," she went on, "the poor fellow was arrested so suddenly that he had no chance to change from his leopard-skin costume. 'Lady,' he admitted to me, 'I came back for mine pants.'"

The Inspector whistled. "What a man!" he said.

"What a night!" retorted Hildegarde Withers. "I'm worn to a frazzle. And I suppose the newspapers are already setting up front page stories about how the brilliant sleuth Inspector Oscar Piper tracked down the Fiend of the Flea Circus!"

Oscar Piper patted her shoulder admiringly.

"What a woman!" he said softly.

Death on Wheels

(*Continued from page 52*)

He looked at Graney. "You don't mind me questionin' like this, Mistuh Graney?"

"No, no," said Graney. He curled his lip. "You want to know if the Yanks won yesterday?"

"They did," said Ashel. "Now," he continued to Maria, "you and your brother come from Mexico, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, well," said Ashel and thereupon burst into a flood of fluent Spanish. "I was there once," he interpolated to the wide-eyed sergeant, then continued in the language to Maria.

The dancer's eyes snapped. She rose abruptly.

"Sergeant!" she shrilled. "Is it that I must talk the fool? He asks me if I have seen the pyramids of Mexico! He asks me if, from Orizaba, the mountain, I have seen the sunset! With death upon *mi hermano*, with death over my poor head, he asks it! And should I answer? I should not! I shall not talk the fool! Besides——" the beauteous Maria held her nose and pointed to Ashel's cigar—"he smells! I shall march!"

She marched. She stormed out before Graney could recover. When he did it was not pleasant.

"Listen you!" he snarled. "The Commissioner says I got to let you in on this, but I don't have to let you make a sap——"

"Now, now, Mistuh Graney, you see I been in those countries a bit and I'm just investigatin'," Ashel looked benignly at the wrathful sergeant. "It's funny, but Miss Gomez's accent is Cuban and Mr. Escobar was Mexican and they were brother and sister." He paused. "Suppose you could find out about 'em from the consul?"

Graney stared. Reluctantly, he reached for the phone. And while he gave orders that the Mexican and Cuban consuls should be questioned on the point, he looked again at Caroline Mayhew. She smiled at him. Graney barked into the phone. . . .

It was on their way to Babe Escobar's house that morning that they passed the famous Mall in Central Park. On it, roller skaters darted about merrily.

"'S a new fad," said Graney. He looked slyly at the innocent Miss Mayhew and wondered if, on his night off, they mightn't do a turn of roller skating themselves on the Mall. He answered Miss Mayhew's pretty smile.

At the Escobar house there were detectives.

"Anything?" asked Graney of the man at the garage.

"Nothin'," said the detective. He looked pleasantly at the innocent Miss Mayhew, who smiled at him.

"This is Mr. Ashel Mayhew," said the sergeant hurriedly, noting the smile. He glared at his underling.

The detective looked at Ashel, shook his head sadly and entered the garage.

Nothing had been disturbed. There was the sixteen-cylinder roadster with the door open; there the pool of slimy oil; there the strange double track. In the ceiling the little hole where the bullet had been imbedded leered like a malicious eye.

Ashel Mayhew dropped suddenly to the floor, wriggled along to a spot by the door and looked up. He rose.

"Any burns on him?" he asked.

"Nope."

The sergeant winked at his detective, then looked hurriedly at Caroline Mayhew. She only smiled.

Ashel dropped to his knees, examined the double track, followed it out to the street.

"Peculiar," he said.

"You don't say," said the detective.

"Yes," said Ashel. He went into the house. He went over it from top to bottom, noting various things. Then he turned to Graney.

"Sergeant," he said, "I'd appreciate it if you'd drop me at Central Park on the way back. You can take my daughter to a good hotel, can't you?"

"The park!" Graney's jaw dropped, but he caught Caroline's smile. On the way down he discovered that she had corn-colored hair, for she took off her hat and let her hair stream in the wind. . . .

It was in the sergeant's office that evening that Ashel again lit one of the cigars whose odor resembled that of a smoldering bath towel, and asked:

"Did you hear from the consuls, Mistuh Graney?"

Graney looked at Ashel with a sort of quizzical respect.

"Yes," he said.

"What'd they say?"

"They said that—— Well, you were right, Mr. Mayhew."

"Well, I swear," said Ashel, puffing comfortably. "I thought so."

Graney flared. "I'm gonna grill that Cuban wench. She can't make a sap——"

"Now hold on, Mistuh Graney." Ashel seemed alarmed. "Don't do that—yet. Let's let it ride a while."

"What the hell for?"

"Oh——" Ashel blew out a stream of foul smoke—"let's just file it for reference. . . . Could you direct me to where this Mistuh Escobar hung out, Mistuh Graney?"

Graney laughed crookedly. "Hell! There's a dozen places!"

"You mind?"

Graney shrugged. They went to Times Square. They began the round of Babe Escobar's questionable haunts.

"He was pretty tough, wasn't he Mistuh Graney?"

"He was a rat!" snarled Graney. "A lot o' guys would 'a liked to rub him out!"

At a spot in the fifties they paused. It was a speakeasy.

"And this was his favorite, Mistuh Graney?"

"Yeh."

"It's a gamblin' house, too?"

"Certainly!" said Graney irritably. "He was a gambler."

Ashel looked inside the place, looked outside, paused at the sidewalk to drop some coins in the outstretched hat of a legless beggar who squatted there. The beggar thanked him profusely.

They went to other places, but returned to the speakeasy, where Ashel again dropped coins in the beggar's hat.

"You're damned liberal," muttered Graney.

Ashel did not answer, then: "Mistuh Graney, didn't you say you had Mistuh Escobar's servant in the jug?"

"Yeh."

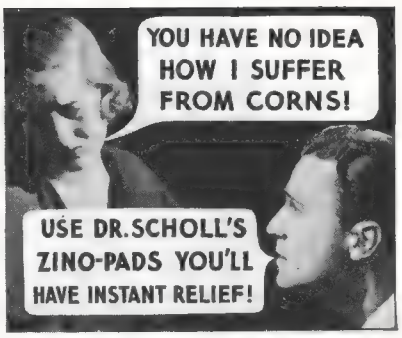
"Why?"

"Why the hell not? He's a material witness!"

"Oh. . . . Could I see him tonight?"

Graney shrugged. "O. K.," he said.

(*Please turn to page* 132)



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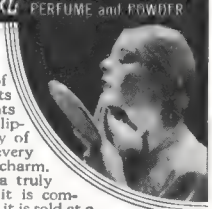

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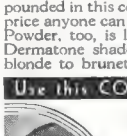

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Death on Wheels

(*Continued from page* 131)

"Have a look, but I'm through followin' you around. I'm goin' to work on this thing right. . . ."

"Very well, Mistuh Graney."

Ashel saw the beetle-browed Julio; Ashel also talked to him, although Julio said very little, and then Ashel made a visit to the police files. Also, that night, he made a visit to the morgue of a famous morning newspaper and while at the newspaper talked to the sports editor. But he imparted none of these things to Sergeant Graney and when he returned to the office next morning that officer was unusually stormy.

"Oh," said Graney, "so it's you!"

"Yes indeed, Mistuh Graney."

The sergeant's face was flushed. He handed Ashel a scrap of paper.

"Well, Hawkshaw, look that over!"

Ashel looked it over. It was a paper like that which Maria Gomez had brought to the office the morning before. Ashel read:

"This is the last! Look out below!"

The note, like the other, was printed in indelible pencil.

"What's this, Mistuh Graney?"

"That note was sent to Maria Gomez! She got one like it yesterday mornin'! I forgot to tell you."

"I'm sorry for that, Mistuh Graney. What've you done about it?"

"I've doubled the force at the Escobar house. I'm givin' her added protection wherever she goes." He ran his fingers through his red hair. "My God! If you could have seen the look on that guy's face when we found him. He must 'a seen somethin' horrible, whatever he saw. . . . An' I'm scared we'll find her the same way."

"Hm-m-m," said Ashel, which seemed to agree with everything the sergeant had said. "What about that money and the watch and the ring that Mistuh Escobar had, Mistuh Graney?"

"They haven't turned up. We've got every hock shop an' every fence watched in town. Not a damned clue except these notes!"

"Now I wouldn't say that, Mistuh Graney. Really, I wouldn't."

"The hell you wouldn't! Well I would!" Graney hesitated. "Have you got somethin'?"

"Well, now I can't rightly tell, Mistuh Graney, but I got a plan."

"A plan!"

"Yeah. I want you to take away the guard at Miss Gomez's house tonight."

Graney stared. Finally he exploded.

"You're nuts! Take 'em away? An' let her get rubbed out, too? What the hell! Why I'd be kicked off the force! I'd be—— What if she turned up with that God-awful look on her face, too?"

"Mistuh Graney," went on Ashel calmly, "that's my plan. Don't let the papers know and don't let Miss Gomez know. Just start it up Broadway and let it seep out gradually. It'll seep plenty I think before tonight. But"—Graney started as Ashel leaned forward. There was a strange gleam in the Missourian's eyes that was unfamiliar—"you and I, Mistuh Graney—we'll be there!"

Graney stared a moment. "Cock-eyed," he said. "What's the plot?"

"I think we'll catch somethin', Mistuh Graney."

"Why?"

Ashel made a few trenchant remarks. "And that's all I got to say, Mistuh Graney. We'll see about the rest."

Graney considered. But, as has been said, this was a situation unparalleled in the criminal history of New York. Graney, desperate, called the Commissioner who had saddled him with this man.

"He says he's got a plan," said Graney.

"Well," said the Commissioner, "that's more than you have."

He was a jolly fellow, the Commissioner. Graney hung up. The guard at the Escobar house, said a rumor, was to be withdrawn. The police, said the rumor, were taking the step because they believed they had the murder solved.

Certain gentlemen who went to the speakeasies that day carried the rumor. It spread up Broadway, where Babe Escobar once had run wild. It seeped into the speakeasies, into the offices of the bookies, into hotel rooms where frozen-faced individuals shuffled cards or rolled dice. By nightfall, the street was buzzing.

By nightfall, too, the papers had heard about it, but had not printed it, since headquarters had refused to verify it. But the papers printed speculations. New York was wondering about the Escobar murder. The papers were demanding that something be done about the death from below and the subsequent threat to the man's sister. The papers did not know that Ashel had discovered Maria Gomez was no blood kin to the notorious Babe. The papers didn't know a lot of things, but they raised a terrific hue and cry.

Graney spent the day in misery, wondering. Night fell and he still sat, and still there were no sane reports to rally him. This thing was getting on his nerves. Babe Escobar's grimace of horror in death swam before his eyes; this eagle-beaked yokel who had invaded his office irritated him and intrigued him by turns; but it is true that even on that day he frequently found time to think of Caroline, daughter of the eagle-beaked yokel.

Nine o'clock struck and into his office walked Ashel. Graney glowered.

"Well," he said bitterly, "what now?"

"Caroline sent her regards, Mistuh Graney. You ready?"

Graney sighed. They got into an automobile, rolled uptown.

"A beautiful city, Mistuh Graney."

"Yeah? A lousy town!"

They reached Riverview.

"What time does Miss Gomez usually come home, Mistuh Graney?"

"Around twelve."

"We'd just as well go have a view o' the river, then."

They went. The night wore on. The hours swung round, came closer to midnight and they returned to the street back of the Escobar garage. From it, they could see the second story windows of the house. One of them lit up suddenly.

"All right, Mistuh Graney. You armed?"

"Hell, I'm heeled all the time!" Graney drew an automatic.

"I just wondered Mistuh Graney." Ashel drew a .44 single action revolver from a shoulder holster.

The sight of the gun silenced the officer. Cautiously, they approached the house. At the door, Ashel paused, drey a key from his inside coat

pocket and opened it. Graney gasped.

"Where the hell'd you get that?" he whispered.

"Why, Julio had it on him when you arrested him and it was in the police files. I got it last night."

Silently, they began ascending a wide, oak stairway to the second floor. At the top, they paused. Down the hall, in the room where they had seen the light, they heard voices.

On tiptoe, they advanced.

The door of the room was ajar. Ashel motioned Graney to enter, then slipped down the hall, presently entered the door to the next room.

Graney, however, did not enter immediately. He stood frozen, for from within the room came a snarling voice.

"I warned you!" said the voice. "I warned him! I told him at the time, I'd get him! I told you I'd get you and I will!"

There was a shrill laugh.

Graney, nerves tingling, rushed into the room. The beauteous Maria was there. She stood clad in a negligee, her back to a dressing table, where, apparently, she had been seated. Her black hair cascaded down her back; her lovely figure was limned against the light and Graney gasped. But not at her beauty. Nor, for the matter of that, at the chilling look of horror and terror on her face.

It was at what he saw across the room, behind a low table, and not far from the bathroom door.

This was the head of a man that protruded above the table. It was a grizzled head with an unshaven, haggard face, from which eyes, alight with an insane gleam, glared.

Behind the table, he could see the body of the man—but it seemed to protrude from the floor. The head was not more than two and one-half feet from the floor.

And in one of the man's hands was an automatic.

This, then, was the death from below.

The beauteous Maria screamed; the thing on the floor, at sight of Graney, laughed shrilly, raised the automatic.

Graney, frozen with eerie dread, did not move, but from the bathroom door—the bath connected with the room behind, Graney saw—catapulted the gaunt figure of Ashel Mayhew, coat flopping like the wings of a huge bat.

He landed on the thing behind the table, smothered it under, knocked from its hand the automatic, reached out hurriedly and grabbed it, stood up.

Weirdly, the hands clawed out, propelled the legless body around the table, made for Ashel, looking curiously like a grotesque, human crab.

Maria Gomez shrieked again.

Ashel Mayhew said:

"Easy, now, Tommy! Take it easy. Its all over, now, Tommy."

The voice was calm. The crawling man stopped, looked up, broke into nervous, wracking sobs.

Ashel shook his head with pity.

"This is Tommy Balfour, Mistuh Graney. He used to be the best racin' driver in the world before—before he got hurt."

Maria Gomez fainted. Graney carried her into the next room, laid her on the bed, hurried back.

The legless man—he was the beggar who had sat before Babe Escobar's favorite speakeasy and to whom Ashel had given the coins—was calmer, now. He leaned pitifully against a chair.

"He got me!" said Tommy Balfour. "I got him! I told him I would!"

Neither Ashel nor Graney interrupted him. The glittering eyes looked blankly, as if into the past.

"She put him up to it! I was engaged to her when he came along. He was my best friend. They planned it. In the race he crowded me! He fouled me! I crashed over the barrier and the car"—he looked down at where his legs once had been—"crushed me. I went to the hospital. They thought I was going to die. They went away together. And they took my things! They took that platinum watch she—*she*—had given me!

"But"—he looked wildly at the two who stood above him—"I didn't die! I made myself live! I came back. And they didn't know me. For months I stayed outside that joint and watched him. I came up here and watched him and I got to know his habits.

"Then I killed him!"

Tommy Balfour laughed shrilly. . . .

In the grounds an hour later they found his platform, the pitiful thing on which he went about. Screwed beneath it were two double wheels from a roller skate.

"The track in the oil, Mistuh Graney," said Ashel. "And"—he shuddered—"the death from below."

They put him on the platform, watched him roll out into the night's shadows.

"God!" said Graney. "We shouldn't 'a' done that!"

"Now, now, Mistuh Graney, we'll satisfy the Commissioner. He can hush it up and it'll blow over. Besides, everything's all square now. Maybe your law isn't satisfied, but things are balanced. You wouldn't send that poor creature to the chair, would you, Mistuh Graney? If he enjoys what's left of his life, can't we let him be? There ought to be mercy in justice, Mistuh Graney.

"Besides—didn't Escobar deserve it?"

"But,"—Graney was bewildered—"but what of Maria?"

"Do you think she'll have much to say with that story hangin' over her, Mistuh Graney? Not her. Not that black-eyed she-cat!"

It was not until on the way downtown that Graney thought to question Ashel.

"But how—how did you figure it, Mr. Mayhew?"

"Well, now," said Ashel, lighting a cigar with the odor like that of a smoldering bath towel, "when I saw that track in the oil I says to myself that a roller skate must o' done it, so I went to the park and looked over the skaters. Sure enough.

"But who would be skatin' in Mistuh Escobar's garage and murderin' at the same time? There weren't any other marks in the oil.

"Then I got to rememberin' about Mistuh Escobar's past and when I discovered he and Miss Gomez weren't what they said they were, I did some more thinkin'.

"So I went to look at where he hung out and come across Tommy. I recognized him from his pictures, Mistuh Graney, because I have an uncommon memory.

"Then I went to the newspapers and

(*Please turn to page* 134)

SPARKLE!
FOR YOUR HAIR
WITHOUT DYEING OR BLEACHING

Most any man is caught—and held—by the light in your eyes, the moist sweetness of your lips, the highlights in your hair. And any girl can have this sparkling beauty.

And how easy it is to have sparkling hair! You yourself can make it gleam with highlights, give it a warm lustrous tint with Lovalon—the rinse that tints the hair as it rinses. There are twelve shades from which to choose—several for each color type.

This harmless vegetable rinse is not a dye, not a bleach—merely a temporary tint that will wash off in your next shampoo. It will banish the dry, brittle look caused by waving, dyeing and bleaching. It removes the yellowness from gray or white hair.

5-rinse packages 25¢ at drug and department stores. Small packages at five and ten cent stores. At smart beauty shops, or send direct to Lovalon Laboratories, Department T-312, 281 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco, California.

LOVALON
Tints the hair as it rinses

Mercolized Wax
Keeps Skin Young

It peels off aged skin in fine particles until all defects such as tan, freckles, oiliness and liver spots disappear. Skin is then soft, clear, velvety and face looks years younger. Mercolized Wax brings out your hidden beauty. **To remove wrinkles quickly** dissolve one ounce Powdered Saxolite in one-half pint witch hazel and use daily. At all drug stores.

LARGEST BOARDWALK HOTEL

THE
AMBASSADOR
ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.
Year 'Round Comfort and Pleasure. Golf. Tennis. Horseback Riding. Fishing, Shooting.
Sun Decks—Indoor Sea Water Swimming Pool.
Attractive American and European Plan Rates. Write
WILLIAM HAMILTON, *General Manager*

VISIT NEW YORK NOW!

At this skyscraper hotel, in the social centre overlooking Central Park, you will find pleasant days . . . cool, restful nights.

$3 A DAY - $17 A WEEK

and up for single room, private bath, radio. For double room, $5 a day, $30 a week. All rates include Continental Breakfast.

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Brand New AS LOW AS $19.75
TYPEWRITER
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Sensationally new low price and easy terms. Standard 4-row keyboard—fully guaranteed by Remington Co. Send no money.
10 Day Trial—then 10c a Day
Send for new literature and easy pay plan—only $1.00 down, then 10c a day. Also bargains in Standard Size refinished office models, sent free. Write for details and special money-making opportunities.
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"Swim or Cry"—NEVER FADES OR RUNS
● DREAMLASH Dyes Eyelashes and Eyebrows Instantly, Permanently. One application lasts 4 to 6 weeks. Easily applied. Reg. size 50c. Mail 10c Today for Trial Size Prepaid.
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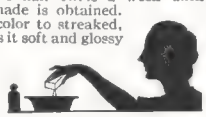
DREAMLASH LAB., Dept TM-12, 420 Orleans St., Chicago, Ill.

A Fine GRAY HAIR REMEDY NOW MADE AT HOME

You can now make at home as good a gray hair remedy as you can buy, by following this simple recipe: To half pint of water add one ounce bay rum, a small box of Barbo Compound and one-fourth ounce of glycerine. Any druggist can put this up or you can mix it yourself at very little cost. Apply to the hair twice a week until the desired shade is obtained. Barbo imparts color to streaked, faded or gray hair, makes it soft and glossy and takes years off your looks. It will not color scalp, is not sticky or greasy and does not rub off.



NEW WAYS WITH FRUITS

Delightful surprises in this bulletin "Fruit Recipes"! Scrambled eggs with apricots, strawberry pancakes, banana bran muffins, frozen fruit salads—dozens of new recipes! Send 10c for your copy to Rita Calhoun, Tower Magazines, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Consult Yogi Alpha

NEW 1934 READING NOW READY

1934 will be the year of opportunity. Yogi Alpha, internationally known psychologist and astrologer, who has amazed thousands by his uncanny predictions, offers a 2500 word Giant Astrological Reading, based on your sign in the Zodiac, giving you predictions month by month with exact days, dates and happenings for 1934 and balance of 1933. Consult it before making any changes in business, signing papers, love, marriage, employment, speculation, health, accidents, lucky days, travel, etc. Send only 50c and exact birth date for complete Astrological Forecast. 300-word Numerology Reading included FREE. Money returned if not satisfied. YOGI ALPHA Box 1411, Dept. 21-D. San Diego, Calif.
If you have a friend who wishes reading, send $1 for the TWO readings.

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...300-WORD NUMEROLOGY READING with order for Astrological Reading.

Death on Wheels

(*Continued from page* 133)

found out about that accident. There was somethin' said at the time about Mistuh Escobar foulin' Tommy, but nothin' came of it. They couldn't prove it. But the sportin' editor, he told me that Mistuh Escobar had had that reputation, so I put everything together and wondered if it wasn't so.

"Then that 'look out below' in the notes tallied up. It looked like Tommy'd been waitin' his chance and hid in the garage by the wall. Then when Mistuh Escobar came in and started the car, Tommy rolls across to the car and opens the door. Mistuh Escobar, seein' who it is, naturally got that awful look on his face before Tommy shot him.

"Then tonight. I figured Tommy'd hear about the guard bein' withdrawn, him sittin' up there and probably hearin' everything anyway and I figured he'd try it. Well, he did."

"But how'd he get into the house?"

"Mistuh Graney," said Ashel gravely, "when a man's legs are off, his arms and hands grow uncommonly powerful. It was easy for Tommy to go hand over hand up any pipe on that house."

Graney, remembering the crab-like motion of the legless man, shuddered.

IT is not of official record in the New York Police Department that the Commissioner acquiesced to the request of Ashel and Graney that Tommy Balfour be allowed to go his way in peace, but there are whispers that he did and, certainly, Tommy was never heard of thereafter.

Probably he is living out his life in reasonable contentment and comfort, for neither Ashel nor Graney remembered to inquire about Babe Escobar's roll of ten thousand dollars, the diamond-and-platinum wrist watch and the diamond ring, and they never have turned up to this day.

It is of official record, however, that, within a month after Babe Escobar met death from below, Vincent Graney was removed from the Homicide Squad and set to pounding pavements again. But the Commissioner, a jolly man, a humorous man and one given to startling and unprecedented things, is rumored to have said at the time that something had to be done in order to satisfy the force and the public and when he demoted Vincent Graney, Ashel Mayhew noted that he winked.

AND just two months after the murder, Ashel Mayhew, reading the paper in his hotel room, from the weather forecast to the last want advertisement, looked up as his daughter bounded in. He had been waiting up for her.

"Hello, pop," said Caroline Mayhew, and she did not seem at all innocent, "did you get the job?"

"Yeah," said Ashel Mayhew, puffing a cigar that smelled like a smoldering bath towel, "the Commissioner put me on the Homicide Squad."

"Swell," said Caroline, "you got the job, I got the man. Vinny proposed tonight. He was off and we went skating in the park."

Ashel Mayhew, reading a want advertisement, nodded absently. The advertisement declared there was excellent opportunity in Baluchistan for a man who understood the growing of gourds. And Ashel Mayhew understood the growing of gourds. He had taken a correspondence course on the subject. He nodded absently again, as Caroline said:

"We're going to be married next week."

But he looked up and discarded the paper when she said:

"Success at last, Pop."

Solving The Gift Problem

This month's New Way Circulars give diagrams and directions for making Christmas presents appropriate for every member of the family. Here they are:

De266. A smart little bead trimmed velvet bag to hold powder puff, handkerchief or change.

De267. A crocheted granny afghan made of bright colored wool put together with black.

De268. A new style buttonhole decoration—two white flowers and green leaves made from crocheted cotton.

De269. New style gift bags, a six compartment work bag of figured chintz, a swirl bag for powder box or handkerchiefs, and a large bag to hold wrapping paper and twine, made from burlap trimmed with felt.

De270. Up-to-date doilies for the breakfast table made of monks cloth edged with glazed chintz.

De271. A regulation soldier's bag that any man or boy would be proud to own.

De272. Gift boxes made of glazed chintz and ball trimming for cigarettes, sewing equipment or cosmetics.

De273. A clever one-piece smock for a little boy or girl from six months to three years.

To obtain circulars, write to Miss Frances Cowles, care of this magazine, enclosing four cents for any one circular, ten cents for three circulars, or fifteen cents for all eight. Be sure to indicate which circulars you want by the numbers given in the accompanying descriptions.

Rogue's Almanac (*Continued from page 31*)

took poison, called him on the phone, made him listen to her description of her death agonies. . . . John Hood of Newcastle, England, believed that suicide is a deadly sin, discovered that his wife, an incurable invalid, was planning to take her own life, chopped her to death with a hatchet to save her soul. . . . William Kipfort of Chicago was tired of it all, shot at himself eleven times, missed each time, was arrested, fined $100 for carrying concealed weapons. . . . A clerk named Knop committed suicide with a bomb in a hotel in Brno, Czecho-Slovakia. In addition to himself he killed six others, wounded eighty and practically demolished the hotel.

11. *Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Tex.* Thirteen Negro soldiers of 24th Infantry hanged for complicity in Houston riot (Aug. 23d) in which soldiers ran amuck, killing twenty-two. Forty-one got life and four short terms at court-martial. 1917. . . . *London.* English forerunner of Snyder-Gray case nears end. Frederick Bywater and Mrs. Edith Thompson sentenced to death for murder of her husband. 1922. . . . *Buenos Aires.* Police foil plot to bomb train bringing President-elect Hoover from Chile. 1928.

12. *New York.* Dorothy Arnold vanishes. 1910. . . . *New York.* Walter Clyde Davis, arrested on charge of embezzling $1,000,000 from his Colorado Springs Bank, hangs self in cell at Police Headquarters. 1932.

13. *Brooklyn.* Gordon Fawcett Hamby kills DeWitt C. Peal and Henry W. Coons in hold-up at East Brooklyn Savings Bank. Escapes. 1918. . . . *Los Angeles.* William James Guy, 24-year-old Welshman, charged with Wanderwell murder. 1932.

14. *Newark.* Robert Elliott Burns, chain-gang fugitive who made good, arrested and held for Georgia authorities. 1932.

15. *New York.* Battling Siki, Senegalese fighter, murdered. 1925. . . . *Los Angeles.* Marian Parker, 12, daughter of Perry M. Parker, banker, kidnaped. Father gets $1,500 ransom demand. 1927.

16. *New York.* Boss Tweed of Tammany Hall arrested on criminal fraud charge. Out on $5,000 bail. 1871. . . . *Petrograd.* Rasputin, mysterious fanatic who dominated Russian royalty, murdered by Prince Felix Youssoupoff, Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich and friends. Survives large doses of cyanide of potassium in cakes and wine, is shot, apparently killed, revives, nearly escapes, is shot again, and body thrown in River Neva. 1916.

17. *Los Angeles.* Marian Parker's father pays ransom, receives bundle in which he believes she is wrapped asleep; discovers, after messenger vanishes, that she is dead. 1927.

* * *

Competition Is the Death of Trade. Vincente Murillo Gonzalez of Managua, Nicaragua, whose home was robbed, published a notice of protest in the local paper. "If the thieves steal from the poor," he said, "they in turn will have to become thieves and the thieves' business will be ruined." . . . On an average day in the United States, 33 people are murdered, 8 kidnaped, 274 assaulted, 137 robbed, 110 homes are burglarized, and a loss of $273,972 is caused by incendiary fires. . . . Buenos Aires has 2,153,000 inhabitants, of whom 103,500 are thieves and robbers, 12,000 highwaymen, 6,000 white slavers, 5,000 professional gamblers. Down there they want to take the vote away from everyone with a criminal record. . . . An old woman in China was raided six times by bandits who carried off her mule, her wheat, her household possessions, killed her two sons. They came a seventh time, demanding her two daughters-in-law as slaves. She took a spade, led the bandit chief to the back of her hut, said, "Dig here. They starved to death a month ago." . . . Escapes from Devil's Island are increasing. One hundred got away during the past year, seventy-nine during the calendar year 1932.

* * *

18. *Atlanta.* Ex-Congressman Langley of Kentucky paroled after serving eleven months of a two-year term for conspiracy to violate prohibition laws. 1926. . . . *Albany.* "Legs" Diamond, acquitted the day before on kidnap charge, reforms permanently. 1931.

19. *Hanover, Germany.* Fritz Haarmann, slayer of twenty-four or more boys, sentenced to death. 1924.

20. *New Brunswick, N. J.* Pennsylvania Railroad Company found guilty of manslaughter in connection with six deaths in powder explosion on train, September 6, 1923. . . . *Paris.* Chambermaid in small hotel finds apple in suitcase, bites it, discovers $2,000,000 Conde rose diamond stolen from the national museum at Chantilly. 1926.

21. *Trenton, N. J.* End of chain-gang case. Gov. A. Harry Moore, after public hearing, refuses to sign extradition papers sending Robert Elliott Burns back to Georgia. 1932.

22. *Echo, Oregon.* William Edward Hickman, 19, arrested for kidnaping of Marian Parker, jailed, admits part in crime, but claims child was strangled by accomplice; tries twice to commit suicide; on way to Los Angeles confesses he alone is guilty. 1927

24. *Dover, N. H.* Isaac Sawtelle convicted of killing his brother, Hiram; sentenced to death. 1890. (A good joke on Isaac. He planned to take Hiram for a drive over the state line into Maine, where there was no capital punishment. But he miscalculated the distance; killed him in his hanging home state after all.)

* * *

Father's Day. Andrew McCullough and his son Roy had not met in twenty-one years. They did recently, though—in the State Prison at Milledgeville, Ga. The father was about to be electrocuted for murder. The son was serving a short misdemeanor sentence. . . . A man convicted of mur-

(*Please turn to page 136*)

MOTHERS
don't neglect your
CHILD'S COLD

● Don't let chest colds or croupy coughs get serious. Rub Children's Musterole on child's throat and chest at once. This milder form of regular Musterole stimulates, warms and penetrates to the very seat of the trouble. Ease comes in 5 minutes and relief, as a rule, in 5 hours. And in the morning the trouble is usually gone. Recommended by many doctors and nurses. Pure, safe to use, not messy. All druggists.

RADIO: *"Voice of Experience," Columbia Network. See newspaper for time.*

CHILDREN'S
MUSTEROLE
BETTER THAN A MUSTARD PLASTER
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
MILD

NRA

A SMART HOTEL IN ATLANTIC CITY
The ST. CHARLES
On the Boardwalk at New Jersey Avenue
European or American Plan. French and German cuisine. Sun deck. Boardwalk porch. Dancing, Concerts, Entertainment. A stay at the St. Charles makes one's visit to America's Smartest Resort altogether delightful.

Some Women Always Attract

The women you most admire, and perhaps envy, prize their beauty and guard it. Their lustrous eyes and clear skin are the result of daily care. Above all else, these women keep their blood free of the poisons of constipation. Thousands of such women find Dr. Edwards Olive Tablets a matchless corrective. Made of pure vegetable ingredients. Know them by their olive color. They are a safe substitute for dangerous calomel. Not habit-forming. All druggists, 15c, 30c and 60c.

Don't Let Acid Indigestion Spoil Your Fun!

LIFE is too short to let one evening after another be spoiled by heartburn, gassy fullness and sour stomach. Do as millions do, keep a roll of Tums on hand in purse or pocket. Tums contain no soda or water soluble alkalies, only soothing insoluble antacids that pass off undissolved and inert when the acid conditions are corrected. They're refreshing, pleasant. No bad taste, no after-effects. 10c at all drug stores.

Free Beautiful new gold and blue 1934 Calendar-Thermometer. Also samples TUMS and NR—Just send name and address, enclosing stamp, to A. H. LEWIS COMPANY, Dept. T1-S, St. Louis, Mo.

TUMS FOR THE TUMMY

EAT LIKE CANDY

TUMS 10¢ STOMACH DISTR.

HANDY TO CARRY

TUMS ARE ANTACID . . NOT A LAXATIVE

For a laxative, use the safe, dependable Vegetable Laxative NR (Nature's Remedy). Only 25 cents. NR

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of THE MYSTERY MAGAZINE, published Monthly at Chicago, Ill., October 1, 1933.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared J. E. Flynn, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of THE MYSTERY MAGAZINE and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Tower Magazines, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.; Editor, Hugh Weir, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, J. E. Flynn, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: Tower Magazines, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.; Catherine A. McNelis, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.; Marie L. Featherstone, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

J. E. FLYNN.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September, 1933.

(SEAL) LAURETTA E. GANLY.

(My commission expires March 30, 1935.)

Rogue's Almanac

(*Continued from page* 135)

der, but later cleared, sued his lawyer (who, he claimed, had definite proof of his innocence) and got $29,250 damages. . . . 129,855 men and women began terms in Federal and State prisons in 1932—8,111 fewer than in 1931. . . . Four High Point, N. C., boys, members of a high school science club, opened graves to photograph skeletons for study. Discovered, arrested, tried, they were sentenced to spend five nights each in the cemetery. . . . A Brooklyn judge has figured that ten days in jail in Winter are equal to two in Summer. . . . John Curry, one of the Hex murderers of York, is studying painting in Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia, where he is serving a life term.

* * *

25. Six dead from drinking poison booze in New York. Wife and child slayer awaiting trial in Brooklyn commits suicide. Five dead after brawl between county officers and local police at South Pittsburgh, Tenn. 1927. . . . C. D. Lawson, a farmer of Walnut Cove, N. C., kills wife, six children, lays them out for burial, goes to woods, shoots self. Poverty-stricken J. H. Haggard of Vernon, Texas, kills his five motherless children and himself. . . . Coast Guard fires on supposed rum-runner on Lake Erie at Buffalo. Eugene F. Downey, Jr., wounded in leg, bleeds to death as companions flee. Grand jury refuses to indict guards. . . . Chester Fugate, accused of murder, lynched at Jackson, Ky. 1929. . . . *Merry Christmas!*

26. *Washington.* Methodist Board of Prohibition, Temperance and Public Morals discovers, after investigation, that drinking among students takes place at parties, dances, hotels and in parked cars. Tells the world. 1928.

27. *Athens.* Greece refuses to send Samuel Insull, former Chicago utilities millionaire, back to America for embezzlement trial. 1932.

28. *New York.* Start of Molineux case. Mrs. Katherine Adams dies after drinking bromo-seltzer poisoned with cyanide of mercury and sent by mail to her roomer, Harry Cornish. Roland Molineux—who was on bad terms with Cornish—was accused of sending the poison to cause his death. 1898. (Molineux was tried, convicted, retried, acquitted.) . . . *Robbinsville, N. J.* David Ware, 50, Negro, arrested by State Trooper Peter Gladeyes, beheads him with razor, flees, is pursued, captured by 150 troopers, 200 American Legionnaires, posses, bloodhounds, airplanes, and balloon, 1928. (Arrested. Convicted. Executed the next spring.)

29. *Los Angeles.* Norman Selby (Kid McCoy), former prize-fighter, guilty of manslaughter in death of Mrs. Theresa Moers. Gets one to ten years. 1924. (He came out not long ago.) . . . *Fort Huachuca, Ariz.* Pvt. James Abernathy, Negro soldier at this post, runs amuck, kills Capt. and Mrs. Joseph Wessley, Capt. and Mrs. David A. Palmer.

30. *Easton, Pa.* Bomb mailed here, addressed to New York Fascist editor, explodes, kills three, injures two. Second bomb explodes, injuring two. Other bombs mailed at Easton were addressed to prominent Fascist sympathizers of New York, Baltimore, Pittsburgh. Later, similar bombs arrived by mail in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Youngstown, Ohio. 1931.

31. *Cleveland.* W. C. Sly and G. K. Fanner killed in payroll robbery. 1920. (It was the climax to a series of such crimes. Public indignation demanded—and got—an investigation of crime in Cleveland. It was directed by Prof. Raymond Moley and was the future brain truster's first introduction to the public.) . . . *Lansing, Mich.* Life for a pint! Mrs. Etta Mae Miller, convicted of liquor selling four times, gets life under State's new habitual criminal law. 1928. . . . *Oviedo, Spain.* Ramon Fuente, who had killed his father-in-law in Cuba, kills his father, sister, brother-in-law, two nieces, fires house, commits suicide. 1931.

The Line-Up

(*Continued from page* 43)

—no, that word is quite correct, I meant exactly that—for as a student and embryo writer of mystery stories, I find "MYSTERY MAGAZINE" of inestimable value as a source of learning. In fact, the persistent reading of this magazine is, in itself, a sound, practical course in the technique of writing this specific type of story.

My favorite author? The "Master" of course. No one but the incomparable "Sax" could have given us the fascinating "Fu Manchu." I therefore consider the "Devil's Brood" the best story in the August number. I have no suggestions for the improvement of "MYSTERY MAGAZINE." It would be analogous to the story of the man who, when presented with a valuable horse asked naively, "Where's the saddle?"

Please accept my congratulations for the efficient manner in which you have presented the magazine, and my well-wishes for your future success.

James Edward Allen.

How Was the "Riddle of the Dangling Pearl," Miss Pawlas?

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—I've been reading MYSTERY MAGAZINE ever since it first appeared, and, to date, have found none that can compare with it. And all for such a trifling cost!

It is very hard to say which story I like best, but I think I can safely name "The Man with the Rubber Face." It ended just at the right time—before one got tired of it.

Sax Rohmer has me looking under beds and starting at slight noises but his stories are worth it.

Miss Hildegarde Withers in Stuart Palmer's "Murder on the Blackboard"

The Line-Up

kept me burning the oil" until very late —but how about another of her adventures?

May I add that I'm good for nothing until I've read the current issue backwards?

Miss Geraldine Pawlas.

Everything—and Then Some!

DEPEW, N. Y.—Mystery stories are very interesting to me. I think that MYSTERY is the best—absolutely the best—magazine published today. For a dime we certainly get our money's worth and your extra departments for the ladies are certainly grand. I strongly suspect that the men read them, too! A word now!

No more departments.

After all it is a mystery magazine and we buy it primarily for its mystery stories.

My favorite story this month is "Murder on the Blackboard."

My favorite writer is Sax Rohmer. He has everything.

Mrs. P. F. Godwin.

And May Our Stories Please!

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—I feel like doing my part and joining the boosters for MYSTERY MAGAZINE.

In spite of minor complaints one reads in the Line-Up, I believe that all your readers are well satisfied.

Why shouldn't they be?

MYSTERY MAGAZINE affords plenty of high quality entertainment and a variety of contents for the insignificant sum of ten cents.

Fair minded people do not complain. They realize the difference in opinion.

For every article one reader does not like there are probably ten readers that like the same article immensely.

My favorite authors are Sax Rohmer and Albert Payson Terhune.

My favorite stories are anything that either of them writes.

I also have an especial liking for the "book-length" story and the "Make-Up Box" department.

May your sales increase and continue and your business prosper.

Mrs. P. E. Jensen.

So Help Us!

CHICAGO, ILL.—Truth may be stranger than fiction, but give me fiction for real thrills and action, that compels one to sit in one position until he or she reaches "The End."

"Murder on the Blackboard" by Stuart Palmer, in your September issue is just one example of the many fine stories I've read and enjoyed to the utmost in your publication.

MYSTERY MAGAZINE is an oasis in the desert of dullness, which brings it's readers fascinating Mystery stories as no other publication has.

It all goes to prove that, when better mystery stories are written, MYSTERY magazine will publish them.

Mrs. Helen Johnson.

What About It, Colleagues?

COLUMBIA, MO.—What about a few words of appreciation for the Line-Up? I find the comments and suggestions offered there by people from all parts of the country most interesting and entertaining. Usually I find there corroboration for my own ideas about MYSTERY MAGAZINE. I regard Sax Rohmer, Walter F. Ripperger, H. Bedford-Jones and Albert Payson Terhune as the "Big Four" of mystery writers. Anything they set down in print makes interesting reading. I like the stories told in pictures well enough, but I do not like to think of the space wasted by the pictures. We MYSTERY readers could put that space to good use that otherwise we lose. Suppose we sacrifice the pictures and crowd in one more good tale.

I think my colleagues of the Line-Up will surely agree to that suggestion!

Harry Opperman.

An Old Friend

CALUMET, MICH.—I am writing to tell you that the MYSTERY book and I have been friends for years, but I take a greater interest in it now than ever before.

I don't really know why, but it must be the more thrilling stories and the other attractive articles that are enjoyed thoroughly by the feminine heart.

I must congratulate myself on my patience for being able to wait every month for the new issue.

Truthfully I can say that I read Sax Rohmer's stories first of all.

I also enjoy the book-length novels and Shirley Holmes' adventures. The idea of having Joan Watson and Shirley was certainly a clever one. All I possibly can say now is to keep up the good work and pass the wonderful book on to us all.

Martha Shahoski.

Breezes Off the Lake

ERIE, PA.—I am one of those women who never get time to do all the things I'd like to. I am a reading enthusiast but have such a little time to give to reading, that I have to make every minute count.

I could never interest my husband in reading a magazine until I brought home a copy of your first "MYSTERY MAGAZINE." Since that time he is a "MYSTERY" fan. We like it so well that when our subscription runs out, in a couple of months, on three of the major magazines, we are going to pass it up and continue with just "MYSTERY." I had been getting these other magazines for years but now I find it is sometimes weeks after they are received, before they are even unwrapped.

Now the big question is—"When does the MYSTERY book come out again?" It is read from cover to cover by both of us, within two or three days.

Sax Rohmer is our favorite writer. Give us more stories by him. They interest us particularly.

We like the way you now run your book-length story. It is much handier and makes better reading.

We cannot praise "MYSTERY" too much and it has our highest endorsement as a magazine above magazines. It costs less and is worth more.

Annabel Salter.

Surprise!

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—Saturday past marked my first purchase of the "MYSTERY" magazine. As a rule, I never buy very many magazines but this one with it's bright cover attracted me. I walked past the counter where a number of them were placed and

(*Please turn to page* 138)

"I Saved Money and Surprised My Husband . .

. . With Smart . . Durable

WINDOW SHADES at 10¢ EACH!

YOU could have knocked my husband over with a feather when I brought home ten new shades for a dollar—when he expected the total cost to be $5 or more. And it wasn't the saving alone that staggered him. He had never *seen* such colorful chintz patterns. And the way these Clopay Shades keep their beauty through months of wear is a constant miracle to my husband."

. . . More than a million women already know this new kind of shade is a real "buy" at 10c. Clopay Shades won't crack, pinhole, fray or curl. Rich solid colors and chintz effects. Send 3c stamp for complete set of color samples to Clopay Corporation, 1217 York St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

At All 5c and 10c Stores and Many Department Stores

CLOPAY WINDOW SHADES

$3 EFFECT FOR 10¢ VIVANI FACE POWDER ROUGE CREAMS LOTIONS

Resinol Helped My Skin in 3 Days

"When I decided to try Resinol Soap and Ointment, my complexion was a sight from pimples and blackheads. I had a horrid, muddy looking skin and when I used powder it looked even worse. After three days use of the Resinol Ointment and Resinol Soap, I could see an improvement. Now all my friends tell me how well my skin looks."

(Signed)—Mrs. M. N.*

*Name on Request. St. Louis, Mo.

Does *your* skin annoy or embarrass you? Then get Resinol Ointment and Soap from any druggist today. You will doubtless find, as thousands of others have, that this simple treatment can help you.

For a free sample, and copy of skin treatment booklet, write Resinol, Dept. 4-C, Baltimore, Maryland.

The Line-Up

(*Continued from page 137*)

couldn't help but go back to the counter after the word "Mystery" had taken my eye. Quite naturally I thought, "Oh, I guess this is another one of those lurid, fanciful magazines dressed up with a nice cover."

Candidly I was more than surprised, then convinced it was well worth reading after I had glanced through the pages of the magazine.

I immediately spotted my favorite author of mystery in the table of contents—Sax Rohmer. I truthfully wish every issue would have a tale from his pen. Albert Payson Terhune is another favorite of mine. Your full length novel is a special inducement and it balances off well with the numerous short stories and articles. Glad to see your advertisements are clean as well as interesting. The helpful household hints are of special interest to every home lover, I know.

Wishing you continued success, I am,

Mildred A. Slye.

It's Nice to Be Different

BALTIMORE, MD.—I enjoy reading "MYSTERY" more than any other magazine on the market.

About two weeks ago I was "fed up" on magazines because it seemed that they all turned out alike. It was in one of the stores here that I happened to pick up "MYSTERY" with no intention of buying it, but as I glanced through it, I came upon "The Man Who Was Lost," by Jacques Futrelle and Donald Rush, and started to read the first page. It seemed such an unusual story that I read on, until finally I was interrupted by the words "Can I wait on you?" I was so interested in the results that I purchased the magazine and finished my story.

I've also read "Murder on the Blackboard" and I know I won't regret my action.

Miss Virginia Elliott.

"Till Death Do We Part"

HARMARVILLE, PA.—May I offer a few constructive (I hope) criticisms? Your excellent editorship has proven that you are trying to please the readers . . . and succeeding admirably.

Please bring back more of the actual fact stories. There is something fascinating about these true cases. Impressive and interesting, they are never overwritten and possess enough mystery to satisfy the most fastidious.

Forget all about that advice to the love-lorn column. It would cheapen your magazine beyond description. Such tripe may be found almost in all the inferior magazines. Please don't consider it.

H. Bedford-Jones is my favorite author. I deeply appreciate his gripping, moving stories which actually possess that elusive quality of realism. He lifts the mystery story to higher standards in literature. The Jewel Jugglers are my favorite "regulars" because of their "humanness." MYSTERY MAGAZINE has that appeal which is of absorbing interest to all classes of readers because its pages are crowded with the most varied of mystery and detective details, situations and angles.

Keep the quality of MYSTERY high and clean and we readers will back you to the last copy.

Floyd Miller.

Try It After Midnight, Miss Andras

MT. PLEASANT, PENNA.—I just bought the October issue, and I read about every article in it.

It was one November, I bought an issue to pass a boring evening off, and I found H. L. Coates' story, "The Scarlet Fan," so interesting I followed it up, and I haven't missed a copy since.

Walter F. Ripperger is my favorite author. His little Simeon Graves is wonderful the way he solved the mysteries in "The Weird Murders of Mr. Carn"; and I know that Walt's "Murder Men of Molokai" will be equally interesting. The fantastic tales that Sax Rohmer can spin, sure send cold chills down one's spine.

I find the stories especially interesting in the evenings, when every little sound adds the interest of the mystery.

It's really unbelievable that one can get such great stories and good illustrations for only a dime. So here's three cheers for the MYSTERY MAGAZINE; may its popularity be long lived.

Miss Frances Andras.

Mr. Wells!!!

BOSTON, MASS.—The "Contents" page of this publication is, in more ways than one, the essence of the whole.

To begin with, the Blue Eagle meets the eye and proclaims in no uncertain manner that that which follows, is the product of the finest American minds —where there is loyalty, there must be other desirable qualities.

I should have to search very hard, and search in vain, for any cause for complaint in "Killers' Castle." This plan of presenting a complete book-length novel with each issue is the essence of wisdom in the compilation of the ideal magazine, particularly if from the masterly pen of Van Wyck Mason.

Mr. Hays' astonishing revelations in "What Is Wrong with Justice?" undoubtedly will do much to arouse an apathetic citizenry to the deplorable condition of their legal machinery. This first of the series of special articles by so well-known an authority promises the rest to be the most constructive criticism needed.

All hail the creator of Shirley Holmes! In the "Adventure of the Queen Bee," we have the deductive powers of the greatest detective of all time brought up-to-date by his charming daughter. A marvelously new conception of a far from outworn theme. I am looking forward, with pleasurable anticipation, to the future "Adventures."

"Murder Men of Molokai," while it is possessed of an intriguing mystery, is misnamed a short story; it is really a serial. But, aside from that unimportant distinction, the possibilities in the bizarre Dascom will, the suggestive gruesomeness of the "worm's kiss," added to the disturbing presence of the uncanny Yee Sin, are all keeping me in a constant ferment of impatience for the next issue. Would it be possible for you to have the "MYSTERY MAGAZINE" brought out on the first of next month? Then, I would have to wait all of ten days less than the present dismaying total.

Sax Rohmer's "Death of a Mummy" established, to my satisfaction, the writer as an authority on the occult and the mysterious.

I've never read anything to match "Fifty Pound Horror." Thomas Burked surpassed himself in this. Imagine being under the protection of a power that kept you from bodily harm, no matter what you did. What a fruitful subject for the imagination!

"The Knife" is a cleverly conceived adventure of "The Thinking Machine," but a little too brief and hurried to arouse any great emotional interest.

"Jewel Jugglers" is not only full of amusing smuggling tricks, but shows Alfred Payson Terhune as understanding in his treatment of human characters as he is famous for his dogs.

If anyone had told me I would read as hilarious a farce as "The Gorgeous Detective" in MYSTERY, I should have laughed at the statement as a farce in itself. It only goes to show that, if "variety is the spice of life," MYSTERY is the spiciest of periodicals.

"Delilah's Sisters" is an instance of what it takes to evoke human interest. A tense, gripping series of incidents that held this reader's attention from the first to the last word, revealing the darkness of treachery and the beauty of heroism.

Who was it that said: "The more I see of men, the more I prefer dogs"? Whoever he was, he must have known such a dog as Tip in the story from true-life, "A Dog's Strange Vigil." A dog detective! MYSTERY has rung the bell again in originality.

"Write Your Own Mystery!" Here is a fine, new department for amateur criminologists. After reading Donald Rush's "I Go Sleuthing," I must have a try at it myself.

That was a most novel presentation of Fergus Hume's famous "Mystery of a Hansom Cab." A story in both prose and picture, as this was, is peculiarly effective.

Of course, it goes without saying that "The Line-Up" is far from being the department of the least importance. How refreshing to hold communion with so many different minds; all congenial in their taste for MYSTERY.

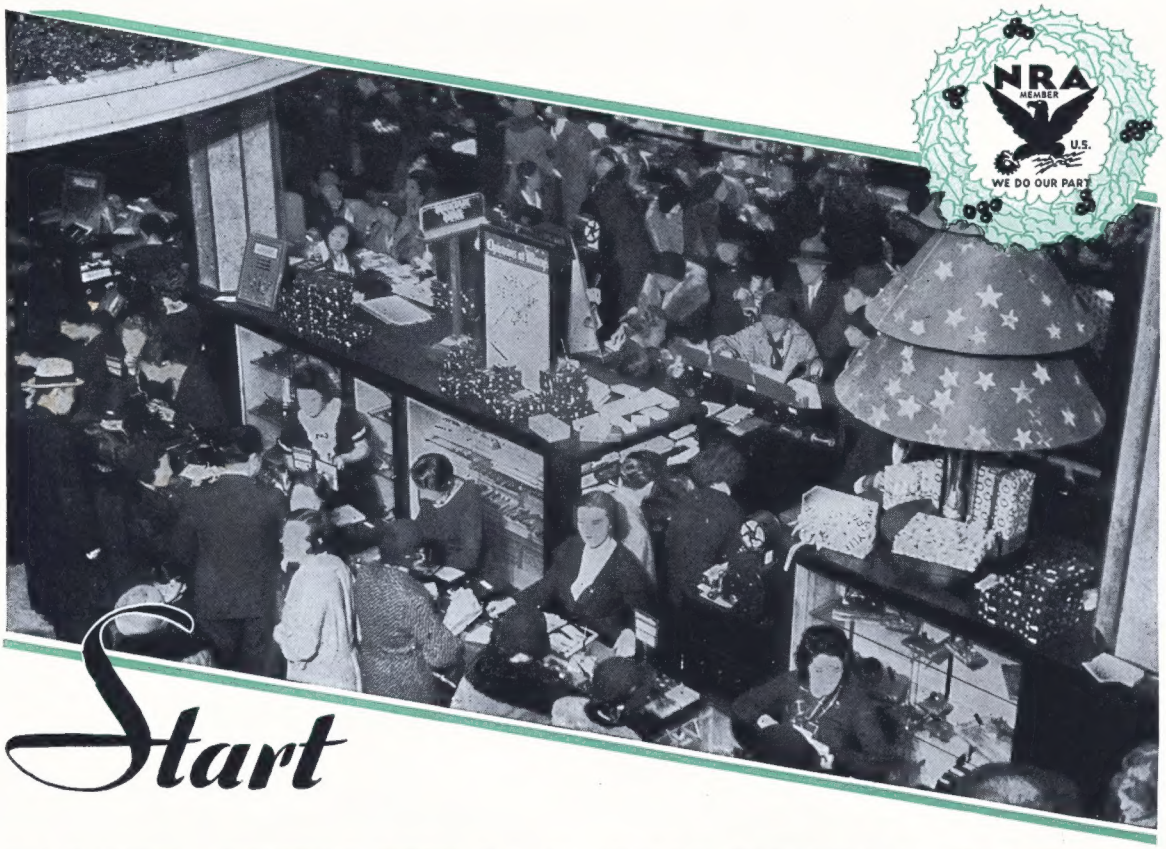
In "The Rogue's Almanac," the reader travels from Humor to Tragedy and back again. Altogether, a complete recording of the gamut of human emotions, not to mention it's historical and criminological significance to the world. Such a compilation proves, beyond a shadow of doubt, that "crime does not pay" and, at the same time, teaches tolerance and understanding.

Being all male (I hope), I'm not competent to pass judgment on such articles as "The Business Woman Type," "The Make-Up Box," etc. Although they must, of course, have a great appeal for the ladies (bless 'em), I shall, nevertheless, have to respectfully tip my hat and pass them by without comment.

No doubt throughout my letter a current of profound admiration has made itself felt. It is to be understood, when I say that this is the first magazine I have ever read that catered to my every mood in one and the same issue. It has everything—and the best of everything.

Believe me, if there be no considerable change of policy, you will have a no more constant and appreciative reader than myself.

Ernest Gay Wells.



Start YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY . . . . and *Speed Recovery* . . . .

NOW! Today! Take your Christmas Shopping List in hand . . . with the toy train and games, and bicycle lined up for little Bill; the perfume, cosmetics and lingerie for sister Betty; the smoking set and sweater and reading lamp for the head of the house; the radio for all the family; and then sally forth to do your Christmas shopping.

In other years you have been urged to do your Christmas shopping early to avoid last-minute confusion, saleswomen's frazzled nerves, and late deliveries. This year you are urged to get going as early as November first for a patriotic purpose . . . to help put business back on a basis where everyone can enjoy greater prosperity . . . and the happiest Christmas in five years.

Manufacturers and retailers have done their part by signing the N. R. A. code . . . putting more men to work . . . raising wages. But only as the wares they have manufactured are purchased by you and you and you . . . the shopping women of America . . . will *more* goods be manufactured, more men put to work . . . production and consumption kept in a never-ending cycle.

So start early on your most bountiful Christmas shopping tour. More than your own dear ones will benefit from your purchases. A whole nation is ready for recovery. It's up to you women. Do your part!

CATHERINE McNELIS

IT TAKES HEALTHY NERVES—

FROM A RACING AUTO into a hurtling plane...It's all in the day's work for Mary Wiggins. She says, "Camels never give me edgy nerves even when I smoke a lot."

JOE: Are you nervous after your first flight?

SUE: Not a bit...I smoked Camels all the way, and I couldn't feel better.

A MATCHLESS BLEND

IT IS MORE FUN TO KNOW
Camels are made from finer, MORE EXPENSIVE tobaccos than any other popular brand.

Steady Smokers turn to Camels

LISTEN TO MARY WIGGINS — greatest of all girl stunt performers. She says:

"I have to be *sure* my nerves are healthy to do my stunts, changing from a speeding auto to a plane, the high dive on fire into fire, wing walking while up in a plane, and the high-altitude parachute jump. As to smoking, I've found that *Camels* don't interfere with healthy nerves. I've tried all the brands. Camels are *milder* and better in *flavor*. They do not give me edgy nerves even when I am smoking a lot."

☼ ☼ ☼

You'll like that rich Camel flavor and mildness. And your nerves will tell you the difference there is in Camel's costlier tobaccos.

CAMEL'S COSTLIER TOBACCOS

NEVER GET ON YOUR NERVES **NEVER TIRE YOUR TASTE**

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